

[illegible]

December 25-31 1987 Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX

Richard Davenport-Hines: An infamy of business men 1421
G. K. Chesterton's artful innocence 1419-20
Boris Kagarlitsky: inside the new Soviet press 1430, 1442
Leszek Kolakowski: Marxism v Christianity 1438
Refugees and the morality of nationalism 1422-3
Lives: Arthur Miller, Richard Nixon, Owen Chadwick on Benjami. J. rewett,
Patricia Highsmith on Jack the Ripper 1425, 1424, 1437, 1427
Mick Imlah: the poems of Jeremy Reed 1435

AR1 1426, BIOGRAPHY 1421, 1427, ENGLISH LITERATURE 1419-20, FRENCH LITERATURE 1436, MEDIEVAL STUDIES 1439, MUSIC 1440-41, POETRY 1435, POLITICS 1422-3, RELIGION 1437-8, RUSSIAN LITERATURE 1442, THEATRE AND CINEMA 1425, UNITED STATES 1431

BORIS KAGARLITSKY *Glasnost*, the Soviet press and red greens 1430, 1442
ROGER LEWIS Peter Pan comes of age 1430
 In brief 1430
 Letters on The Dutch Golden Age, Ezra Pound, Shakespeare's Sonnets, etc 1431
 Commentary
DAVID NOKES *Vanity Fair* (BBC1) 1432
JOHN ROSSELLI Carlo Goldoni: *Courtesymania* (Olivier Theatre) 1432
H. R. WOUTDHUYSEN Sales of books and manuscripts 1432
J. MORDAUNT CROOK *Franz Xaver Winterhalter and the Courts of Europe, 1830-70* (National Portrait Gallery) 1433
ISABEL COLEGATE *The Edwardian Era* (Barbican Art Gallery) 1433

OLIVER REYNOLDS Synopticon (poem) 1434
MICK IMLAH Jeremy Reed: *Selected Poems* 1435
D. W. HARTNETT Lawrence Sall: *Devotions* 1435
CLAIR WILLS Eiléan Ni Chuilleanáin: *The Second Voyage* 1435
PETER BROOKS Gérard Genette: *Seuils* 1436
ROBIN BUSS Philippe Jaccottet: *Une Transclusion secrète* 1436
PATRICK MCCARTHY Ian Noble: *Language and Narration in Céline's Writing – The challenge of disorder*
Nicholas Hewitt: *The Golden Age of Louis-Ferdinand Céline* 1436
OWEN CHADWICK Peter Hinchliff: *Benjamin Jowett and the Christian Religion* 1437
J. R. PORTER Peter Calvo-Cressi: *Who's Who in the Bible* 1437
LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI David McLellan: *Marcus and Religion* 1438
BRIAN GOLDING Raymonde Foreville and Gillian Kell (Editors): *The Book of St Gilbert* 1439
NIGEL SAUL Chris Given-Wilson: *The English Nobility in the Middle Ages* 1439
RUTH MORSE Avril Henry: *The Mirror of Mons Saluoclaudia* 1439
CHRISTINE WOODHEAD Corneil H. Fleischer: *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire* 1439
PAUL GRIFFITHS Carl Dahlhaus: *Schoenberg and the New Music – Essays* 1440–41
MICHAEL TANNER Howard Vogt: *Flagstad – Singer of the century* 1441
CHARLES FOX Jan Carr, Digby Fairweather and Brian Priestley: *Jazz – The essential companion* 1441
JASPER REES E. Ann Kaplan: *Clash Around the Clock – Music revolution, postmodernism, and consumer culture*
Richard Meltzer: *The Aesthetics of Rock* 1441
NEIL CORNWELL William Edward Brown: *A History of European Literature in the Twentieth Century*

Among this Week's contributions (43)
 Author: Author, 433
 Seventy-five years on: 442
 Index of books reviewed: 443
 TLS Listings: 444-44

Cover picture
 "The Virgin and Child Entombed," by Giotto di Bondone (1456-1501), one of the 165 colour plates in *The Queen of Heaven: A selection of paintings of the Virgin Mary from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries* by Bruce Bernard (248pp. Macdonald Orbis, £30.95/\$59.95).

D. J. CONLON (Editor)
G. K. Chesterton: A half century of views
400pp. Oxford University Press. £15.
0 19 21260 6
G. K. CHESTERTON
As I Was Saying . . . : A Chesterton reader
Edited by Robert Kille
314pp. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans;
distributed in the UK by Paternoster. £15.50
0 8028 3597 X
*Daylight and Nightmare: Uncollected stories
and fables*
Edited by Marie Smith
144pp. Xanadu. £9.95.
0947761 17 9
Thirteen Detectives: Classic mystery stories
Edited by Marie Smith
256pp. Xanadu. £10.95.
0947761 23 3
The Annotated Innocence of Father Brown
Edited by Martin Gardner
274pp. Oxford University Press. £12.95.
0 19 217748 6
Collected Nonsense and Light Verse
Edited by Marie Smith
192pp. Xanadu. £9.95.
0947761 19 5
The Essential G. K. Chesterton
Edited by P. J. Kavanagh
516pp. Oxford University Press. Paperback
£5.95.
0 19 282056 7

Now that 1984 is past, it can be seen that G. K. Chesterton, writing *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* in 1904, had a much better notion of what the modern world would be like than George Orwell had in 1948. London much less changed than any of the Edwardian prophets whom Chesterton satirizes in his opening chapter would have expected; the Boer War reflected in the relations of the United States with Nicaragua; local loyalties and a cult of colour and individuality ~~revived~~ revived ~~against~~ against the increasing drabness of the world, in a way which would (admittedly not until about 1998) issue in violent resistance to a scheme for solving London's traffic problems by a great northern ring road at the expense of the small communities in its path – there is nothing nearer as accurate about Britain in *Nineteen Eighty-four*, unless, for those interested in hermeneutics, it is the "athleticism of mind" which Winston Smith learns in order to persuade himself that language works independently of the world, "an ability at one moment to make the most delicate use of logic and at the next to be unconscious of the crudest logical errors".

One of the major developments in Chesterton's reputation that can be traced through D. J. Conlon's *G. K. Chesterton: A half century of views*, which deals with Chesterton criticism of the period 1936-85, is that Richard Ingrams in 1974 could already see that he was going to prove the better prophet, while Kenneth M. Hamilton, writing in the same conditions as Orwell in 1951, thought Orwell's prophecy "clearsighted" and Chesterton's "romantic escapism". In fact, both Chesterton and Orwell were good prophets in relation to what most interested them - Orwell's concern with the need of totalitarian politics to control all knowledge, and Chesterton's conviction, which Ingrams quotes, that "he who lives in a small community lives in a much larger world". But "double-think", remains, as it was in Orwell's lifetime, of direct interest only to a small class, while Chesterton hit on something important to everyone.

Chesterton's accuracy was far from being an accident. It is not only — as many of Conlon's critics point out, not always with approval — that Chesterton cared passionately for what ordinary humanity feels and thinks. It is also that he had particular convictions about how one should understand humanity. In a passage rightly made central in Robert Knille's *As Was Saying . . .* A Chesterton reader, Father Brown attacks those who think that the scientific study of humanity means

getting outside a man and studying him as if he were
 a giant (c) insect in which they would call a 'd
 imperial light). When the scientist talks about
 type, he never means himself, but always his neigh-
 bour, probably his poorer neighbour. . . . The d
 light may sometimes do good, though in one sense
 it is the very reverse of science. So far from becom-

knowledge, it's actually suppression of what we know. . . . "the secret": [of understanding how a murder was committed] is exactly the opposite. I don't try to get outside the man. I try to get inside the murderer. . . . I am always inside a man, moving his arms and legs; but I wait till I know I am inside a murderer, thinking his thoughts, writhing with his passions. . . . Till I am really a murderer.

In some people's hands, this scheme would end in making "one's personality the test, instead of making truth the test", which is (in an essay called "If I had only one sermon to preach" put by Knille before his excerpts from Father Brown) how Chesterton defines pride.

was prepared to believe almost anything he said, but was soon forced to concede that most of his ideas wouldn't wash": but in the end, however often in the immense volume of his writing one finds him irresponsible or wrong, realizing how much more profoundly, how surprisingly and how often he is right.

The disillusionment is curiously often unfair. Knille prints a verse by Oliver Herford in which Chesterton is seen looking at the sunset while standing on his head, and crying "how grand the SUNRISE is tonight!" But although Chesterton occasionally uses that conceit to express a lovable dottiness (such as his own



Now, as P. N. Furbank has said (in an essay, "Chesteron the Edwardian"), which I am sorry Mr Conlon has not included), "the virtue he thoroughly understood and practised was humility". It is very characteristic of Chesteron that in this same essay on pride he associates humility with something epistemological, "the receptive power and the power of reaction in surprise and gratitude to something outside", and identifies that with the power to be happy. This conjoined empathy and humility issues in a mind, as John Carey felicitously puts it, "like the dawn sky", and that not only in relation to people, but to the whole universe so far as sight and touch and understanding allow one to be in it — as Father Brown was in the murderer. There is a fable in Marie Smith's collection of unedited pieces, *Daylight and Nightmare*, in which a knight conquers a dragon by taking refuge inside him, which perhaps means that.

The best brief summaries of Chesterton's Conlon's book are those of (delightful pairing) Ronald Knox and Katharine Whitehorn. Mgr Knox talks of Chesterton's capacity to seize on the essences of things, as of that "primitive monster with a strangely small head set on a neck not only longer but larger than itself: with one disproportionate crest of hair running along that neck like a beard in the wrong place; with feet each like a solid horn, alone amid the feet of so many cattle", which is his picture of a horse. Katharine Whitehorn gives as a parallel example the great comic poem in which Chesterton visualizes what it would have meant if, as E.E. Smith claimed, the Welsh Disestablishment Bill had really shocked the conscience of every Christian community in Europe.

Whitehorn describes as her own case what might be the norm among those who read Chesterton over a long period—growing up “so interwoven with his way he put things that I

finest *trouvaille*, a short story begun by Max Pemberton and presented by him to Chesterton to solve as a Father Brown story, in 1914, and never reprinted in book form. It is a gift to both detective story and literary criticism, wonderful in the way in which Chesterton introduces his subtler but bolder sense of landscape, and his taste for paradox that derives in this case from a more vertiginous, perhaps religious sense of human capacities for good and evil, on top of Pemberton's ingenuity.

The style of Chesterton's stories, which is at once dense, coherent and airy, makes it difficult for readers to keep their balance. Martin Gardner, in *The Annotated Innocence of Father Brown*, comments very well on such matters as the conformity of the stories to Chesterton's theory of fairy-tale, which offers to the child the possibility that the limitless terrors with which we are all born can be defeated. He gives many examples of revision which show Chesterton to be less artistically carefree than he often seems. And, since his commentary has an American readership in mind, he offers the English reader the delightfully Chestertonian experience of seeing England—Bovril, Hampstead Heath, Boxing Day, stamp-paper, Nelson's column, rooks—as a foreign country. But he also makes some extraordinary mistakes by reading too fast: sometimes unimportant, as when he describes Whitsuntide as beginning on Whit Sunday although in the following line Chesterton speaks of the Thursday before Whit Sunday; or the village of Bohun Beacon as forty miles from the town of Greenford, forgetting that Chesterton calls the distance half a mile, and remembering that the village blacksmith is described as the strongest man for forty miles around; sometimes important, ascribing to Iceland the frozen but undoubtedly English landscape that evokes the circle of traitors in Dante's hell in "The Sign of the Broken Sword", because Chesterton says "as if it were Iceland".

D. J. Conlon's book, too, almost seems designed – and not only in the case of 1984 – to duplicate the complex experiences of reading Chesterton. One wearies of the most attractive stories about him – the small boy who was asked after having tea with him if he had had an instructive afternoon, and replied "I don't know what that means, but oh! you should see Mr Chesterton catch buns with his mouth" – when one reads them six times, for the same reason (the detachment by inflation of persona from person) as one wearies of his idiosyncratic flow of ideas and figures of speech. But the adverse criticisms make one feel as he did about the opponents of Christianity: what must be thus attacked may well be the truth. Evelyn Waugh finds his faith in the Common Man smug, Malcolm Muggeridge wishes that he had realized the vulgarity and littleness of human life, Kingsley Amis feels that the hero of *Manalive* fails to demonstrate the perpetual freshness of marriage, and adds that Chesterton could not write funny dialogue, while Benny Green finds *Manalive* "a kind of chaste anticipation" of Pinter's *The Lovers*, but believes that E. C. Bentley's remark "to him all men were brothers" is stupefyingly imperceptive. The best thing Bernard Levin "can say of Chesterton's anti-semitism is that it was not as vile as Belloc's" – which is wrong somewhere, because whether one takes the vehement pro-Jewish feeling which Leo Hertzler describes in Chesterton's youth, the Zionism of his age, the three nonsense verses which Levin makes sound more anti-Jewish than they are by wrenching them out of context, or even some more seriously coarse and casual remarks, the sum total cannot be described by the same word as Belloc's attitudes.

Marie Smith has put us much in her debt by her selection of detective stories to illustrate this thesis, not only from the Father Brown corpus, but from others much harder to obtain – from *The Club of Queer Trades*, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, *The Poet and the Lunatics* and perhaps most specially *The Paradoxes of Mr Pond*. Borges, she says, thought one from the last of these, "The Three Horsemen of the Apocalypse", the best of all Chesterton's tales, and in its conjunction of haunting scene-painting and working out of an apparently impossible paradox it certainly must rank high – I would say, only after the Father Brown story "The Sign of the Broken Sword". The same combination is present in Marie Smith's

Of all the heroes whom the poets sing
The one I like is General Gering.
A man of iron, cold and stern, it seems,
Ask him the simplest question and he screams.
If any other valiant moves or speaks,
The Court House rings with long protocol sneaks.
These sounds, mysterious to the racial stranger,
Impress an Aryan people with the danger
Of interrupting strong and silent men
Just at the psychological moment when
They are, for Reich, Race, Gering and Gure,
Having hysterics on the Court-House floor...

This is one of many poems collected from Chesterton's journalism and manuscripts and added to the well-known corpus of his light verse by Marie Smith in another of her anthologies, *Collected Nonsense and Light Verse*. Auden thought Chesterton wrote "some of the best pure nonsense verse in English"; but he is probably at his best, not in pure nonsense, but when the freedom conferred by his particular kind of light verse allowed his moral energy to ride free.

If Chesterton's mind was as fresh as the dawn sky, it was also as capacious. To each his own Chesterton. Robert Kille gives us, I suppose, an American Chesterton, stressing the sage, the aphorist, the moral thinker, and illustrating his power of understanding human character with two essays on Abraham Lincoln. P. T. Kavanagh, on a similar but Anglo-

Irish quest (though with twice as much space) shows us in *The Essential Chesterton* rather the story-teller and the literary critic, who "went inside" Dickens and Browning. Marie Smith calls her deliberately more partial collection *Daylight and Nightmare* with good reason. She reprints from the marvellous posthumous collection *The Coloured Lands* (1938), which amazingly no one has reproduced as a whole, his earliest story, "The Taming of the Nightmare", whose title conveys its plot, though not its weird humour. It conveys, indeed, the theme of all Chesterton's imaginative work. His masterpiece, *The Man who was Thursday*, has a *nightmare* as its subtitle: Conlon reprints from Chesterton's last book, *Autobiography*, a disclaimer of *The Man who was Thursday* as "a nightmare of things not as they are, but as they seemed to the young half-pessimist of the Nineties". But the conviction of the book makes it something more than pure nightmare.

Chesterton's finest writing comes out of neither daylight nor nightmare, but from a point in between. Time and again, with the conviction of a mystic, he reverts - as at the end of *The Man who was Thursday* or in its curious little predecessor *Daylight and Nightmare*, "A Picture of Tuesday" - to the creation of something, or everything, out of nothing. His best and deepest gift is an immense and un-

shakable joy in the mere fact of being. Auden said that "he sees, as few writers have, the world about him as full of sacramental signs or symbols", but the feeling is too direct to be described in terms of signification. Garry Wills finds a piece which expresses it more primitively, in an essay in *T. P.'s Weekly* of 1910, and uses it to illustrate *The Man who was Thursday*:

It is at the beginning that things are good. . . . You can use puppies to drug people, or birch trees to beat them, or stones to make an idol, or corn to make a warrior, but it remains true that, in the abstract, before you have done anything, each of those four things is in strict truth a glory, a beneficent speciality and variety. We do praise the Lord that there are birch trees growing amongst the rocks and poppies amongst the corn; we do praise the Lord, even if we do not believe in Him. We do admire and applaud the *prosa* of a world, just as if we had been called to council in the primal darkness and seen the first starry plan of the skies. We are, as a matter of fact, far more certain that this life of ours is a magnificent and amazing enterprise than we are that it will succeed.

On the opposite page, D. J. Conlon places a complaint by Benny Green about Chesterton's "relentless Christian optimism". If that is, as it may be, really the best phrase for his philosophy, "optimism" must be interpreted as this faith in the creation rather than the going on of things; and "relentless" in terms of four lines

from "The Ballad of the White Horse":

Night shall be thrice night over you,
And heaven an iron cope.
Do you have joy without a cause,
Yea, faith without a hope?

As for "Christian", it is always worth stressing that Chesterton became a Christian not through any superimposition of doctrine, but by following the logic of his natural self. This is splendidly demonstrated in *The Spirit of Christmas*, again edited by Marie Smith, and published in 1984 (96pp. Xanadu. £6.96, 0 947761 07 1). For Chesterton's reflections on Christmas emerge not only in his overtly religious writing but in the essay on Dickens's Christmas tales, which singles out as the essential qualities of the feast the sense of crisis, the sense of contrast and the sense of the grotesque, or the paragraph in which he recommends Chaucer because he teaches the imaginative patience which enables us to endure "the undurable dullness of Uncle George" at a Christmas dinner. In Chesterton on Christmas, that is, we find again that mind like the dawn sky contemplating with the eye of a child the individuality of things, which most people have wearied of, as if they were new made. He loved Christmas because its sharp and multifarious individuality led him to one thought, that "God Himself is born again".

To marry or to smoulder gently

Nicola Shulman

BARBARA PYM
Civil to Strangers and other writings
388pp. Macmillan. £11.95.
0 333 91294 4

DALE SALWAK (Editor)
The Life and Work of Barbara Pym
210pp. Macmillan. £27.50.
0 333 48801 4

JANICE ROSEN
The World of Barbara Pym
193pp. Macmillan. £27.50.
0 333 42372 0

CHARLES BURKHART
The Pleasure of Miss Pym
120pp. Austin, Texas: Texas University Press.
\$17.95 (paperback, \$8.95).
0 292 76466 0

In a daunting piece included in *The Life and Work of Barbara Pym*, John Bayley plays the senior critic's trump card, of claiming that Miss Pym's work is by nature wholly unresponsive and antipathetic to critical comment. "The gap between [the novels'] unique selves and what can justly be said about them remains clear and palpable", he says; "... even the friendliest critical comment is superfluous." There is much truth in this: Pym's novels do not yield at all well to criticism, especially criticism of the saltless kind that remorselessly catalogues aspects of the author's life and then matches them up against bits in the books. Biographical elements do figure in the books - her enchantment with Oxford; her work with the International African Institute. An indefatigable note-taker, she drew much from her own life, and yet the repeated instances of precise examples detracts from rather than enhances the novels, nothing her of credit for inventiveness. Indeed, sometimes it was her life that followed her fiction: The imagined village existence of her first book, *Some Tame Gazelle*, in which she projected herself into a spinsterish middle age, is not very different from the world of *A Green Green Leaves*, a late novel which she drew from Fintock, where she ultimately did come to live with her sister, Hilary.

Brief comments are more helpful than long. Janice Rosen's windy chapters in *The World of Barbara Pym* ("Spinsterhood", "Anti-politics") fail to breathe life into the work, whereas Charles Burkhardt's *The Pleasure of Miss Pym* is a more sensitive enterprise, lighting the burden of analysis by breaking chapters up into short pertinent sections. Professor Bayley would rather there were no comment at all, but I at least am glad that some of his fellow-contributors to *The Life and Work* - in particular John Halperin, Penelope Lively and Mary Strauss-Knoll - remained ignorant of his view for long enough to write the illuminating

essays printed here. These three writers take as their theme - among others - the war between the sexes, which is unquestionably at the core of Pym's work. It is perhaps this which gives Miss Pym's novels a greater relevance to today's world than might be expected from books where the making of a pot of tea can "nearly prove disastrous".

Barbara Pym wrote six novels before her seventh, *An Unsuitable Attachment*, was rejected by her own publisher, Cape, and others, one of whom judged it "very well written" but "with an old-fashioned air to it". This happened in 1963, a time when the first shiverings were being felt of what would be more than a decade of sexual licence. *An Unsuitable Attachment*, in which clergymen and anxious spinsters walk abroad carrying parcels of fish for the cat, may well have seemed unsuitable to the spirit of the age. But we are now entering greyer times, when restricted sexual freedom limits choice, when chastity and fidelity are again at large, when women again want to get married. Anyone who wants to know what relations between men and women are going to be like under these circumstances may do worse than to seek edification in the novels of Barbara Pym, but they will not find an encouraging picture.

The most important fact about Pym's female characters is whether or not they are married. On the face of it, married is best. The other unfortunate are condemned to become peripheral people, never at the centre of anything. There is a life of perpetually finding others more interesting than they themselves are found, of carefully dressing for people who don't notice what they are wearing; a life in which they are subjected to the pricks of multiple unconscious slights: "You seem somehow destined not to marry", says the (married) Sophia Ainger to Ianthe Broome, in *An Unsuitable Attachment*. "I think you'll grow into one of those splendid spinsters - oh, I don't mean it nastily or cattily - who are pillars of the church and whom the church certainly couldn't do without."

Many of Pym's unmarried women still harbour a hopeless longing for old flames, like Belinda Bode in *Some Tame Gazelle*, whose love for the preposterously self-important Archdeacon Hocleve is without limit. They are not loved in return. In three of the short stories included in *Civil to Strangers* women remain devoted to men who never go back to them; in two the now middle-aged heroines are reintroduced to the objects of their lifelong devotion, and are not even recognized by them. The women persevere alone the less, needing and almost content with having "something to love". In cases where the man is still visible, these women evince tremendous concern for his welfare, worrying about whether he has enough to eat and performing,

wherever possible, unobtrusive little services for him. For their part, the men accept these services unthinkingly, as a natural right. Occasionally they even slyly solicit proof of a woman's eternal attachment, though wanting no emotional obligation themselves. In the fragment of Pym's "Home Front Novel" printed in *Civil to Strangers*, Edward Wraye clearly doesn't care two pins for Flora Palfrey, who loves him, and he prepares to do to war by turning up on Flora's doorstep to remind her of himself. Unasked, he gives her his photograph. "I couldn't go away without saying goodbye to you", he says. "It's such comfort to know one is leaving behind somebody who cares."

The question of marriage, however, appears at length to be a bit of a red herring. Married women fare just as badly, maybe even worse. They have had the misfortune of living to see their desires fulfilled, and the prized marriage-bond turn to cement. They are used as typists, cooks, housekeepers, nurses, secretaries, and as sympathetic tenders to every minor grievance or ailment that might chance to unbalance their husbands' fragile equilibrium. They are certainly not seen as lovers. Cassandra Marsh-Gibbon, the heroine of the short, complete novel *Civil to Strangers*, is married to Adam, a man who makes even the awful Archdeacon Hocleve seem a paragon of self-effacement. He is also lazy, talentless, petulant, querulous, pompous and a hypochondriac; and thinks Cassandra is pretty lucky to have him. He has long since ceased to see his wife as a desirable woman, nor is he to be shaken from this view by the attentions she receives from their new Hungarian neighbour, Mr Tilos. In one of the best scenes in the novel (which, like much of this posthumous collection, is a little cruder than most of Pym's work), Cassandra and Adam are at dinner when Adam observes of Mr Tilos, "Perhaps he has fallen in love with you. I don't much care for this fish. Is it please?" Adam lifted up a piece on his fork and sniffed it suspiciously. "Do you think it's quite good?"

Barbara Pym was herself unmarried. In an essay in *The Life and Work*, the entertaining A. L. Rowe also draws attention to this fact. "Miss Pym never succeeded in fixing [her man] - and I think I know why", he remarks, and continues, with winning directness, "Miss Pym noticed too much - it makes life difficult, puts men off". The implication being perhaps that had she wanted to marry Dr Rowe, he would not have been willing to oblige her. As for noticing too much, what does Pym notice about men? Mainly, that they are spoilt rotten; that there is always someone to darn their socks and make sure they are wrapped up warm. She notices how they are judged to be in the prime of life at any time up to their middle fifties; and how the best food is reserved for them ("a man must have meat" - perhaps the

women in *Jane and Prudence*, and in the same novel Jane thinks, "Man needs bird . . . just the very best, that is what man needs"), and how they consistently take the last piece of cake, untroubled by pangs of conscience, as no more than is due to them. In short, she notices that they get what they want without ever having to ask for it. Since these novels are seamless examples of shifting perspective, Pym's perceptions are not affected on her own account, but on her characters', behind whose gaze she is invisibly installed. The "noticing", moreover, is accorded to characters in indirect proportion to their being noticed themselves, so the lion's share of observation is evolved in the minds of her ignored and inconsequential women, where noble and poetic thoughts shuffle down with items from the kitchen inventory.

These neglected women, meanwhile, are not as dismayed as they might be. Forbearing creatures, they stoutly make do with what little they receive. Such stoicism could only exist in a world where there is no marital infidelity and no divorce. This is partly because anything is considered preferable to being single, but since divorce isn't even discussed as a solution, there is more to it than that. It is as if the men who made the initial choice had somehow pocketed the key to matrimony, leaving women no more empowered to release themselves from marriage than they were from spinsterhood. And yet her heroes too are strangely powerless. Non-participants in their own fulfillment, they have a passivity which is at odds with their might. In these books it is men who are vessels, and they are moreover leaky. This subtle contradiction runs through all relations between men and women and reverses the current of power. Sometimes it is reinforced by other indications of sexual reversal, as in *Less Than Angels*, where Catherine Oliphant "mends fuses and makes decisions" and Alaric Lydgate is emasculated in his introductory sentence, "he was to do light work, whatever that expression, usually associated with gentlemen unwilling to do 'rough', might imply for men." Miss Pym sometimes feared that her conventional treatment of sexual relations would "brand her a pulp writer", so it is perhaps significant that the novel where these conventions are most fully undermined would have a romantic fiction-writer for a heroine.

Pym's novels and stories reveal the battle but obscure the victor: it is not, ultimately, clear which sex has the upper hand. Her comic, forgiving vision of men and women's failure to come to terms with one another hits as near the truth as that of much greater novelists: in fact, the only other writer who braids the threads of masculine and feminine influence with such inconspicuous subtlety is Edith Wharton, whose novels were tragic. It is sometimes thought that Pym's are tragic, too.

Embarrassment of riches

Richard Davenport-Hines

JEFF MADRICK
Marrying for Money: The path from the first hostile takeover to megamergers, insider trading and the Boesky scandal
320pp. Bloomsbury. £13.95.

0 7475 0058 4
IVAN FALLON, and JAMES SRODES
Takeovers
290pp. Hamish Hamilton. £12.95.
0 241 12073 X

DOUGLAS K. RAMSEY
The Corporate Warriors: The battle of the boardrooms
260pp. Grafton. £12.95.
0 2461 3213 2

RICHARD HALL
My Life With Tiny: A biography of Tiny Rowland
257pp. Faber. £9.95.
0 571 14737 2

DOUGLAS FRANTZ
Mr Diamond: The Story of Dennis Levene, Wall Street's most infamous insider trader
352pp. Bloomsbury. £12.95.
0 7475 0054 1

GEOFFREY WANSELL
Tycoon: The Life of James Goldsmith
384pp. Grafton. £12.95.
0 2461 12921 2

These books give a glimpse into the abyss. Their themes are cruelty, hate and greed: egomaniacs, bullies, liars, blackmailers, wheedlers, tondies and fools brawl and swagger through their pages. Individually their tone and subjects vary, but they all confirm what Aristotle noticed long ago: that the greatest crimes are caused by surfeit, not by want, that men never become tyrants just to avoid the cold.

Jeff Madrick's *Marrying for Money* is an American journalist's account of the development of hostile takeovers on Wall Street in the 1970s. He describes how these were increasingly exploited by corporate raiders like T. Boone Pickens or Carl Icahn, and arbitrageurs like Ivan Boesky, who in turn encouraged the pandemonia of huge mergers, with their opportunities for lucrative speculation and insider dealing. The whole process had no demonstrable public benefit, but for several years it paid politicians and journalists to ignore the abuses that were entailed: this permissive attitude only became impossible after Boesky, in 1986, was forced to pay a personal penalty of \$100 million for illegally trading on the stock market with inside information acquired by bribery. His fall stripped the façade off the rotten edifice, and is a major event in all but one of the books under review.

Boesky, according to Madrick, is a man who "always wanted it all", who became "a glutton for taking risks" in order to defy his "deep" social and emotional "insecurity", and used illegal insider information in a way that was "blatant [and] undisguised". Boesky's instability and self-destructiveness were always so evident that it beggars belief that anyone had dealings with him. His associates seem to have worked on Scott Fitzgerald's principle for scriptwriters in Hollywood: "take the money, and run". The collapse of his operations, and his irretrievable disgrace, were inevitable, in a way that must have been obvious to everyone who was not equally greedy or neurotic.

Takeovers by Ivan Fallon and James Srodes traverses similar ground, with slightly more aplomb. It is a racy account of the personalities and methods involved in business takeovers in Britain and the United States during the 1980s. Both authors are financial journalists, not radical by politics or temperament, socially intimate with some of the entrepreneurs whom they describe; big business is fun to them, and the aura of riches seductive. At the same time they are magnanimous and conscientious writers, whose account of Ernest Saunders, lately chief executive of Guinness, is full of decency. Aside from their rattling yarns, Fallon and Srodes are concerned to show that only one-third of takeovers ultimately enrich the winning side, that 74 per cent of American acquisitions in unrelated new fields during 1950-80 were later divested, and that mergers have dubious consequences for companies and national economies involved with them. They de-

monstrate "how arbitrarily and unscientifically decisions are often taken" in takeovers, by men whom they call "susceptible to irrationality", but whom others might consider seriously disturbed. Their conclusion that "the personalities of the individuals create the major events" is fearsome, since the main protagonists of *Takeovers* are men who seem indifferent to the good of other people, and incapable of understanding what is good for themselves. The fittest judgment on these millionaires is Rebecca West's remark of a British socialist prime minister, that he might have been a decent human being if he had been given borstal training in time.

The Corporate Warriors by Douglas Ramsey is a study in infamy. Ramsey is an American broadcaster of the sort who becomes Director General of the British Broadcasting Corporation in the happiest dreams of Norman Tebbit. His malicious humour will amuse readers who like to think that human life is meant to be one long dog-fight, but essentially his outlook is complacent and deferential. His book is sustained by a facile thesis that because a few American business executives have told him that "the language of war is now an established part of the corporate vernacular", so the theories of strategies like Foch "are as applicable to the wars on Madison Avenue, Wall Street, and Main Street" as to the poppy-fields of Flanders. Ramsey supports his argument with some rhetorical legerdemain and pretentious epigraphs from Oriental and Western strategists. These quotations are seldom apt, but have a patina of learning which will awe his intended audience: yuppies who believe that Jeffrey Archer's novel *A Matter of Honour* is an allegory on public life written by one of our severest national moralists.

My Life With Tiny, by Richard Hall, purports to be a biography of Tiny Rowland, the chief executive of Lonrho, a British conglomerate which controls major investments in Africa, and owns the *Observer* newspaper. In reality Hall has written a loosely organized memoir of his years as a journalist in Africa and as Commonwealth correspondent of the *Observer*, in which the foreground is occupied by his grievances against the latter's editor, Donald Treford. He seems to have had access to research on Rowland's early life by a brilliant investigative journalist, Jack Lunding; but he uses this material unimaginatively, and is choleric in his treatment of Rowland's long, resourceful and often laudable battle with British governmental secrecy. Except when describing an absurd taxi ride in Ghana with an octogenarian general and his formidable secretary, Hall's accounts of Africa, and of Lonrho in Africa, are anodyne. A good book (not unrelentingly hostile) might be written about Rowland and Lonrho, although perhaps only when official archives are released; Mr Hall's memoir will scarcely merit citation in it.

Mr Diamond, by Douglas Frantz, is a far superior piece of investigative journalism into the career of Dennis Levene, an investment banker with Drexel Burnham of New York, who provided Boesky with some of his hottest tips. It is a vivid account of greed and mendacity. Levene (who believed "that the rest of the world were suckers") grossed \$12.6 million in five years by insider trading and trampled everyone around him. The nadir of his career occurred after his arrest, when he submitted a pre-sentencing memorandum of ineffable self-pity, whining about his petit bourgeois origins, and attempting to present himself as one of Horatio Alger's battling American nobodies by appending over sixty rejection letters which he received when he first tried to get a job on Wall Street.

Geoffrey Wansell's biography of James Goldsmith is fascinating. Goldsmith's grandfather, Adolph Goldschmidt, of Frankfurt, bought a large estate in Suffolk before the First World War and spared no expense to ingratiate himself with the country. He took up polo, confined a grandchild with a German accent to his bedroom when English guests called, and used his money to secure a local parliamentary seat for his narcissistic son Frank. The family convinced themselves that opulent condescension would win the love of neighbours and retainers, and when instead an indiscreet wartime correspondence with German relations led to their ostracism, Frank left England and became the resident director of a group of

luxurious French hotels. French hotel staff, unlike Suffolk retainers in tied cottages, could be sacked if they were inattentive or threatened his carapace of selfishness.

Frank Goldsmith and his family cultivated the most extraordinary self-regard. It was his special "pleasure" to bring "the foyer of the hotel he was leaving to a halt as his entourage swept through". He had invincible conceit and self-pity. His mistress died in an operation to unblock her Fallopian tubes "because he had wanted to perpetuate the Goldsmith name": Wansell compares this to the social humiliations in Suffolk, and comments, "yet again, the world had saved its cruellest blow for the Goldsmith family". Eventually, another of Frank Goldsmith's kept women was married by him, and produced James in 1933. The child was "magnificently cosseted" by grovelling retinues in his father's hotels, and in a characteristic incident at the age of six won the jackpot on a fruit machine at the Hotel de Paris in Monte Carlo. He called two waiters ("a Goldsmith did not stoop to filling his own pockets")



James Goldsmith in a picture from *Tycoon* by Geoffrey Wansell, reviewed on this page.

and had them pile the coins on a silver tray for him. He was slow to read because, as he told his father, "when he grew up he was going to be a millionaire, and would have somebody to read to him. There was no need for him to learn in the first place." This freakish child grew up willing "to be thought insane . . . providing he could control his own destiny".

James Goldsmith is a case of infantile triumph. In "fury" he kicks "inanimate objects", or defenestrates a breakfast tray because there are pits in his orange juice. As an adult he will "steal food from someone else's plate if he likes the look of it". Where Frank Goldsmith demanded a strange muddle of obedience and love from Suffolk peasants, French waiters and *femmes galantes*, his son has wanted the same reassurance on a global basis. From adolescence he has been an "outrageous" gambler, defying even destiny not to love him, and believes "business could be just as much fun as gambling, especially if you treated it in the same way". For a long time these attitudes elicited commercial distrust or social distaste, but according to Wansell he has become in recent years one of the twenty richest men in the world. It is an interesting way for a planet to work.

Most of the financiers in these books are morose men gnawed by envy. They pass their days in buying and selling and feuding; they know the price of everything and the value of

nothing. They fester with rage, jealousy, enmity, and pride. If they began life poor, they wanted money at any cost; if born rich they expected glory; and when they are bested, they require revenge. In their heyday they claimed to epitomize the economic zeitgeist of President Reagan and Mrs Thatcher: when the arrest of Boesky foreshadowed the collapse of the takeover boom, Goldsmith lamented, "we have now entered the post-Reagan period of big business, big government and big unions fighting back".

These men survive on a sense of crisis and of personal isolation. "I need problems", says Rowland, "I have to have them". He is prone to "passionate rage" and "hectoring invective", and told one colleague, "I am going to crucify you and your family". Goldsmith "likes to feel the world is against him", and tells Wansell, "Struggle is what we're built for".

Many of their lives appear sad as well as grotesque. It seems necessary, if one wants to be super-rich, to lose touch with most living feelings, and to leave one's family and lovers almost equally deadened or bereft. Several of these financiers regard themselves as gloriously sexy, but the reality is that their most singular achievement has been to make fornication dreary ("the girls were always pretty, but usually bored"). Parties given for their children are acts of self-glorification or serve as backdrops for the posturing of their friends. Thus the eighteenth birthday party of one plutocrat's son is remembered for the scene when a financier, Gerald Ronson, who has since been arrested, refused to sit at table with his ex-stockbroker, Tony ("The Animal") Parnes, whom he blamed for persuading him to support the Guinness share price during their bid for Distillers.

Money brings no security and the ruthless deals are not intended to provide continuity or stability. "Jimmy wakes up every morning convinced that he has nothing at all", according to his closest colleague. Goldsmith believes that after a takeover, "a bust-up" is "infinitely better" than gradual managerial rationalization, and like many such men, he is ambivalent about his children having control of his money after his death: "people who inherit are weak and soft because they've never had to fight in their lives". "We're a pirate ship at sea", Ted Turner, Ramsey's idol in *The Corporate Warriors*, tells employees, to convince them of the greatness of his soul. "We're gonna stay on until the end of the world". Absolutist monarchs of old at least had a sense of dynasty and sequence; but today their equivalents are so convinced of their own glorious uniqueness that their policy is *après moi, rien*.

When God makes a rich man, to adapt Clough, he intends all others to crush him. No one who reads these accounts of the ravening wolves of cosmopolitan finance can doubt that the system in which they operate is economically ruinous and a pitiful abasement of human values. Yet many of these books encourage a heroic view of their subjects. "Tycoons are the gladiators of the modern financial world", according to Wansell. Rowland is "tigerish" and compared to Tamburlaine in Hall's memoir. Ramsey's plaudits are too tasteless to quote. Fallon and Srodes are unwarrantably dismissive of criticism that comes from individuals outside the Conservative and Republican parties. Although ostensibly critical these six books are intended in their different ways (to quote the dustjacket of *Marrying for Money*) as "a businessman's . . . guide" and as "an essential tool for anyone who wants to understand the new ethos on Wall Street and in the City of London". Their tone is seldom denunciatory: their effect therefore must often be corrupting. Few financiers or entrepreneurs of any stature will be interested in reading stale accounts of what they know at first-hand, but impressionable second-raters, in search of good stories and role models, will. The message given by these books is that although one is at error to go as far as Boesky, only dupes and cranks don't play rough. Self is everything; community responsibility is a chimera. Instead of being the cynosure of admiring eyes among the backers and advisers of Thatcher and Reagan, or the inspiration of bucket-shop yuppies, these moguls need to have their financial actions and their human values endlessly and reiteratively denounced - crushed, in Clough's phrase,

Refugees, immigrants and the claims of the nation-state

Rogers M. Smith

GILBERT LOESCHER and JOHN A. SCANLAN
*Calculated Kindness: Refugees and America's
 half-open door, 1915 to the present*
 346pp. Macmillan/New York: Free Press,
 £17.95.
 0029273404
 ALAN DOWDY
*Closed Borders: The contemporary assault on
 freedom of movement*
 270pp. Yale University Press, £16.95.
 0300082440

The fact has often had ugly consequences, but there it is: apart from the odd hermit, people have always lived their lives within particular communities. In this century, across the globe, the most ardently sought form of political organization has been the nation-state – a large-scale, centralized political system governing populations who, because of language, ethnicity, religion, culture, ideology, propaganda, or some other factor, feel themselves to be a distinct "people". The causes of this phenomenon are many: advancing economic systems, communications and transportation placed severe strains on existing politics, aspiring native elites and oppressed populations resisted, yet imitated, the power of the original nation states of Europe, and so on. These same forces could eventually make the nation-state obsolete. Yet today its predominance among the still diverse range of human régimes is incontestable.

The governments of these nation-states, old and new, are armed with technologies of unprecedented power for external defence and internal control. Yet like governors since time immemorial, they have faced severe difficulties in creating and maintaining effective rule over the populations and territories for which they claim authority. They have been troubled by such questions as: whom they will try to keep within their borders, whom expel, whom admit from outside, whom exclude? And sometimes the efforts of national governments to retain power against militant rivals produce conditions of turmoil from which many ordinary citizens flee.

As the division of the world into nation-states has been consolidated, national régimes have often and increasingly chosen to do some or all of these things. Such actions are hardly novel in kind, but they are in their scope and effectiveness. Elaborate legal restrictions, enforced by walls, barbed wire, mines and armed border guards, compel some groups of people to remain where they would leave, and others who would come to turn away. Ethnic, religious, or political minorities have been driven out to create homogeneous populations, while peoples and lands to which a nation-state claims historic title have been annexed, by agreement among national elites or by coercion. All these developments have become virtually normal features of life in a world where power is embodied in the nation-state.

As a result, the twentieth century has produced vast numbers of people with the political status which, as Hannah Arendt and others have noted, symbolizes the harsh potential of the modern world system: that of the refugee. Different legal systems offer disparate, intensely contested definitions of this status, but common to all is that the refugee is a person without a country to which he or she can safely return. The refugee has been a cast adrift, usually because his religion, ethnicity, economic aspirations, political beliefs or political attitudes in some way stand opposed to his putative government's efforts to create and maintain a strong nation-state. That imperative can rarely be safely resisted.

Yet while the phenomenon of the refugee, collected to state-building, is deeply expressive of the character of modern political life, it is one that naturally tends to expand as the margins of modern political consciousness – not necessarily occasional harries of dramatic mass flight from refugees and waves of public sympathy in response to their suffering. In a world of nation-states, refugees are persons outside everyone's central concerns. Only when their plight becomes politically useful, or melodramatically tragic – and sometimes not even then – does it come to be widely recognized.

Three scholars, all at the leading Catholic

university in the United States, Notre Dame of Indiana, have done considerable service in documenting various aspects of the modern experience of nation-states and refugees. In *Calculated Kindness*, Gilbert Loescher and John A. Scanlan present a thoroughly researched survey of American policies towards refugees from the end of the Second World War to the present. In *Closed Borders*, Alan Dowdy sketches the legal and policy developments in a dismayingly large number of states which have restricted a person's freedom to leave, return, or enter elsewhere (though the book is much more concerned with rights of exit than rights of entry under immigration laws). By making emigration take the form of illegal escape, by denying re-entry and by limiting available havens, these restrictions have played a significant part in creating populations with nowhere to go. The discussion of refugee, expatriation and immigration problems, and the broader political difficulties that generate them, will be greatly helped by these authors' conscientious, balanced and readable assemblage of the known facts.

From any perspective the facts are troubling.



A detail from Alan Dowdy's photograph of Cuban refugees kissing through a fence at Lant Cay, outside the Orange Bowl football stadium in Miami.

Under the ancient empires, the feudal system and the mercantilist monarchies of early modern Europe, restrictions on entry and exit, and forced exile, were widespread enough. But the coincidence of modern instruments of control and pervasive efforts to remake the world into a collection of strong, homogeneous nation-states has meant that such actions are more extensive and effective than ever before. After a brief moment towards the end of the nineteenth century when borders in Europe and the Americas were relatively open, the First World War saw the introduction of new restrictions, including the requirement to carry passports, which endured after the war's end. In 1932 the Soviet Union added internal passports to its stringent restraints on exit and entry, and many of its satellite states after the Second World War have followed suit. The United States, on the other hand, led the way towards more elaborate immigration restrictions in non-Communist lands with the ethnocentric national quota system which it adopted in the 1920s. European nations were only allowed quotas proportionate to their historic contribution to the existing American populace, and Asians were largely banned outright. More than twenty nations then enacted restrictive immigration laws, with Europe and Latin America similarly excluding Asians, and Asian countries excluding Indians and Chinese.

The civil strife, wars and wholesale expulsions that accompanied state-building round the world between 1912 and 1949 uprooted roughly 100 million people. Conflicts in India, China, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Central America have since added at least 12 million more. The dismal catalogue of brutality and suffering that lies behind those figures encompasses every inhabited continent. Some notable instances: after the First World War, the struggles that eventually led to a new secular Turkish State resulted in the massacre of roughly three-quarters of a million Armenians and exile for 320,000 more; after the Second World War, the more than 13 million displaced persons in Europe included one million Poles, who fled areas annexed by the Soviets, while 500,000 Ukrainians, Lithuanians and White Russians were relocated from Poland to the

Soviet Union, often involuntarily; in 1946-7, Muslims fled India, while Hindus fled Pakistan, producing some 14 million refugees in all; from 1967 to 1972, waves of aliens were expelled from Ghana (Nigerians), Sierra Leone (Ghanaians), Equatorial Guinea (Nigerians), Niger (Dahomans), Uganda (Asians and Kenyans) and Zaïre (various nationalities); and the later 1970s and 80s have witnessed renewed outpourings from Cuba, the flight of the Indo-Chinese boat people, 5.5 million refugees from Ethiopian wars, and many others. At the end of 1984 there were at least 10 million refugees around the world, even by the relatively strict definitions of the term current in international law (which generally accord refugee status only to those fleeing political, not economic, threats).

As Dowdy documents, government attempts to dictate the terms of both emigration and immigration are increasing. He is most concerned about the proliferation of bans on the rights to emigrate, typical of most Communist countries and "ideologically doctrinaire one-party states". With appropriate alarm, he reports that over five times as many states are

ones give priority to advancing the political ideals of influential actors, ideals which are linked to material interests but may at times be pursued at their (partial) expense. On occasion, "pragmatic" and "ideological", or more inclusively "political", interests can be allied with humanitarian views, as when the United States aids genuine victims of Communist persecution. But more often, humanitarian policies are seen as being in conflict with pragmatic and ideological positions; and while Loescher and Scanlan do not labour the point, it is clear they believe humanitarianism ordinarily has more moral weight than its rivals. The "calculated", politically self-interested quality they detect in American "kindness" is implied to be a moral deficiency.

This sense that claims on behalf of national interests or political ideals should give way to universal humanitarian precepts pervades academic debate on these issues, though not so much popular discussion. And it is to be seen in the more explicit theoretical structure Dowdy gives his work. His position is that of modern humanitarianism, rooted in the individualistic liberalism of the Enlightenment (though like Loescher's and Scanlan's, it may well also reflect the older source of that ethos, the Christian call for universal compassion). Dowdy describes the right to leave one's State as a "natural" individual right (incidentally, it is to my knowledge the only right explicitly granted that status in the United States Statutes). He takes "government by consent" to be a principle with "near-universal acceptance", at least on a rhetorical level, and he accordingly uses notions of the social contract to analyse the rights of States and individuals. He notes that this framework entails a "fairly loose conception of citizenship" that "weakens" the claims of nationalism, and he is unrepentantly harsh towards organicist, "collectivist" ideologies". Early on, Dowdy does accept that a state has a right to control entry as an exercise of its sovereignty. But his concluding chapter shows that he is uncomfortable with all the particular arguments given for limiting immigration, and that while he would not call for totally open borders at present, such a world seems to him the proper ultimate goal. Hence it is clear that for him, too, a global humanitarianism trumps more particularistic moral claims.

This conventional framework for thinking about refugees, immigrants, nation-states and their problems is unsatisfactory, however, and certain of Dowdy's arguments suggest a more coherent approach. It is unsatisfactory because the oppositions it establishes are too stark to be persuasive; because it can tempt the advocate of morality in international affairs into assuming an unwarranted holier-than-thou stance towards "pragmatic" or "ideological" political leaders (though these writers are not great offenders on this score); and above all because it ultimately makes moral principles seem remote from real-world political interests, instead of constitutive of them.

The truth is that we cannot really distinguish universalist humanitarianism or any other reading of the requirements of morality from "ideology". Once such humanitarianism is elaborated at all, as it is by Dowdy, it quickly becomes clear that this outlook, or family of outlooks, represents particular moral and political perspectives that derive from and are favoured by certain cultural and indeed national traditions, and not others. Some such view may none the less represent universal moral truth. But that argument is hard to make out, and it certainly cannot be assumed; particularly when one is arguing about the proper behaviour of all the world's societies, many possessing very different traditions. It seems best, then, to treat humanitarianism not as moral truth above the fray of politics, but as a political perspective that needs to be justified to diverse political actors with a range of interests and beliefs – like any other political perspective.

In making such arguments, moreover, it is important to remember that while a universalist, yet individualistic, humanitarianism is impatient with claims on behalf of particular political allegiances, and while it can easily be shown that virtually all known political regimes originate via flagrant violations of human rights, none the less human beings keep creating particular communities, and most find some satisfaction in their sense of belonging to one. Mil-

lions, indeed, appear deeply attached to their nation-states, even those of quite recent origins; and although nationalism has often been bound up with appalling abuses, I do not think it should be dismissed as morally or politically without weight. To be sure, we have no grounds for favouring the nation-state as the form of political community people would seek in an ideal world. But we also have no reason to suppose that some sort of world-state, or world without distinct communities, would be found preferable. Thus, in our actual world, it is inappropriate to treat the concern to maintain particularistic forms of social organization as mere "pragmatism" or "ideology", below the realm of morality.

It may seem that we will lose the soul of humanitarianism if we treat it as an alternative political ideology, potentially but not necessarily authoritative, and as historically linked to certain societies. But this more realistic attitude may in fact make it possible to work for some of its ideals more effectively. The impossibility of distinguishing "humanitarianism" and national "ideology" is particularly evident in the United States. As Dowdy repeatedly points out, certain commitments to human rights form an integral part of America's dominant ideologies and moral traditions. (That is one reason these American writers find humanitarian tenets so compelling.) While such values are hardly hegemonic in American life, their importance to many citizens' sense of governmental legitimacy and purpose is long that no definition of the nation's broader, long-term interests which wholly excludes these concerns is likely to be adequate. Philosophically, universalist humanitarianism is certainly in some conflict with American national ideals; but from a sociological point of view, it is best understood as a constitutive component of them (as Michael Walzer and other moral philosophers have suggested).

It is therefore possible to confront US citizens with the argument that the principles upon which they profess to base their national identity at least occasionally point beyond it, demanding solicitude for outsiders and some material self-sacrifice if they are to be true to their national selves. Different arguments would have to be made to different peoples. But this general approach of defining one's moral outlook, and then building on cognate moral elements within particular cultural traditions instead of claiming to stand above them, is widely applicable. Taking such a route in moral arguments about international issues has two important advantages. Intellectually, it seems the most honest way to convince people that the values which they perceive as moral support certain policies, rather than pretending to possess transcendental or natural moral truths. Politically, such close-to-home arguments may also prove to have more rhetorical force, even though they do not have the advantages which an air of absolute moral certainty provides.

It is none the less true that as long as we appeal to people's sense of the moral requirements of their communities, we are likely to reinforce their sense of membership in those communities. In contrast to the direction that international humanitarianism would take us. It is plausible to believe, moreover, that so long as particularistic communal attachments survive, universal "outsiders" like refugees will remain politically marginal, and human rights and welfare will be endlessly endangered by selfish group conduct. Plausible, perhaps, but again not self-evident. It is at least equally likely that if we push people too rapidly to abandon their feelings of meaningful particular memberships on behalf of what remains an ill-defined cosmopolitan alternative, we may in practice only discredit concern for outsiders, provoking more belligerently self-assertive nationalisms. Those nationalisms may be wholly unresponsive to the wide range of criticisms of existing practices that the moral perspectives visible in most current societies can support. We may do the cause of human freedom more good, then, by working for specific concrete improvements in the existing world of nation-states; saving presumptions about the sorts of communities that would prevail in a better world for a time when we have some hope of reaching it.

These points indicate why the conventional opposition between the "pragmatic" and the

"humanitarian" as well as the "ideological" is also hard to sustain. The opposition holds only if we equate "pragmatic" interests with interests in wealth and power, exclusive of all other aspirations. We commonly do so, but at some cost to useful moral thought, since this equation inclines us to identify the moral with the impractical. Yet it is peculiar to think that a morality ever requires us to adopt courses of action that are in reality counterproductive for our overall moral goals. Any moral perspective that takes itself seriously should in fact be intensely pragmatic, in something closer to the technical meaning of the term. Pragmatism can quite properly be taken to involve only a commitment to using rational inquiry both to identify widespread needs and interest, and to find measures that can best satisfy them. These interests need not be exclusively or primarily material, though such concerns will, of course, virtually always play an important part in any human context. Yet other aspirations will usually be present, at times indeed overriding, and we can remain perfectly pragmatic while trying to meet them effectively. We can "pragmatically" hold that policies which violate our standards of morally respectable human conduct frustrate our deepest concerns, however rewarding they may be in terms of wealth and power. Conversely, we can "morally" hold that policies that do more harm than good to the advancement of those standards, however well intended, are not morally required. It does a mild disservice to pragmatists, and a more important one to the viability of humanistic moral beliefs, to portray them as intrinsically in conflict.

If we recognize the paradoxical particularity of universalist humanitarianism; if we accept that the desirability of distinct communities is an open question; and if we accept an obligation to think practically about how our ideals, once defined, can best be furthered – what follows for the evaluation of complex issues involving refugees, immigration and the powers of nation-states? The sobering answer is that our analyses take on greater burdens than most writers have been inclined to accept. We are first required to indicate what sorts of moral standards we think appropriate to these issues, and why – instead of invoking "humanitarianism" or "morality" as if their content and authority were uncontested. We are also advised to give some weight – though perhaps in many instances not great weight – to claims on behalf of existing communities and distinctive cultural traditions that may be in some disagreement with universalist standards or our own standards. We might, then, not simply presume that every effort to sustain existing politics – by controlling entry, at least – is invalid.

Even when this alternative framework is adopted, I do not think arguments for restrictions can plausibly be taken very far. I find persuasive Dowdy's arguments that moral traditions emphasizing individual liberties of movement, and resting political memberships on choice, are most substantively compelling; and that the national ideals of countries with liberal traditions, at least, point those countries towards the most open borders they can hope to sustain. One may doubt that it is appropriate always to distinguish sharply between those left homeless due to threats of political persecution and those who are fleeing the economic turmoil of failed state-building, as both US and international law do. Certainly the United States cannot easily defend its double standard towards refugees produced by political persecution in non-Communist régimes. The nation would have to show a rare conjunction of imperatives drawn from its capacity to support new arrivals, its historic responsibilities for the circumstances of those displaced, and its legitimate geopolitical concerns. That is unlikely, since the United States seems easily able to afford more generous and even-handed policies towards both immigrants and refugees. It admitted newcomers totalling a significantly larger percentage of its existing population in the first part of this century than it does at present. The admission of refugees would also be more likely to benefit foreign policy goals if the nation did not automatically restrict asylum to those escaping Communism. To be sure, in any country legitimate concern can be raised about overburdening specific communities with an influx of newcomers,

particularly persons requiring extensive social services to obtain housing, medical care and jobs. Those problems are compounded by the tendency of even initially dispersed immigrants to undertake secondary migrations and form ethnic enclaves within their new society. There are serious issues, paralleling the international ones explored in these books, about how far a nation can forestall the formation of such communities to protect the resources of existing ones, without unduly restricting freedom to move internally. Yet incentives for relatively diffuse settlement and financial assistance to local communities receiving a disproportionate number of immigrants can usually be provided. The point is that these are national responsibilities, which nations committed to liberal principles should certainly accept. And far from being undermined, that conclusion strikes me as better defended by arguments that give some weight to national aspirations and ideals, instead of casually assuming the moral superiority of cosmopolitanism.

More difficult issues are better explored in this way as well. For example, Loescher and Scanlan show that Henry Kissinger, as Secretary of State, felt Soviet Jews would benefit most if the United States kept quiet about their plight and made friendly overtures to the Soviet leaders – who might then reciprocate by lifting restrictions on emigration. Understandably, many American Jews criticized this stance, and they may well have been correct to do so. But though Loescher and Scanlan take no clear position on the issue, their account provides some grounds for believing that co-operation may have worked better than confrontation. They note that during the Ford years, when "bilateral relations became generally bad, conditions for Jews tended to become worse, and when relations were generally stable or Moscow had potential benefits to gain, Soviet Jews were permitted greater freedom and larger numbers were allowed to emigrate". Similarly, American anti-Communists like Alexander Haig urged acceptance of Indo-

Chinese refugees after the fall of Saigon and the rise of the Pol Pot régime in Cambodia. But the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was more reluctant for the West to grant asylum to those fleeing the new Communist governments, because it was felt that such behaviour would further antagonize those radical régimes while encouraging the departure of elements which might play a positive role in post-war reconstruction. Loescher and Scanlan believe these arguments had some plausibility also: they observe that when exit is not available, dissident populations seem more willing to work to improve domestic conditions.

The implication is emphatically not that the United States or other Western nations should usually remain silent on limits to emigration and refuse to accept displaced persons. It is that, even from a firmly liberal perspective, deciding which policies will genuinely promote the expansion of human rights and the moderation or demise of repressive régimes is not easy. The right answers are not always those that are initially suggested by an unreflective humanitarianism, just as they are not those suggested by a dogmatic anti-Communism. Hence there is nothing wrong, and indeed there is a great deal that is very right, in debating seriously which courses of action are likely to be beneficial for specified moral goals that can persuasively be deemed obligatory for a particular nation or nations. The conventional framework of discussion on those issues, with its frequent tacit invocation of an ill-defined humanitarianism as morally authoritative, tends to short-circuit such full analysis of these issues. Gilbert Loescher and John Scanlan do not attempt extensive moral appraisals in their work, and Alan Dowdy's efforts, while useful, only begin to break the seal on the range of topics that must be considered. Even so, the facts made available in these books, and the arguments they develop, should assist us in recognizing that these are the kinds of questions that must next be addressed.

THE TIMES Looking back



Who are these people – and how did they make the news in 1987? Find out next Thursday in *The Times Review of the Year*

and don't forget: *The Times* will be published on Boxing Day this year. Order your copy now

THE TIMES
A lion among paper tigers (25p)

John A. Scanlan

A taste for crisis

Garry Wills

STEPHEN E. AMBROSE
Nixon: The education of a politician 1913-1962
752pp. Simon and Schuster, £16.
067152866X

One of Richard Nixon's many political gifts was a talent for driving his opponents to extremes of doctinness. Among those who have written about him Fawn Brodie and Bruce Mazlish are the most conspicuous victims, but they just led a trample of people rummaging through Nixon's psyche. That psyche would have to be declared a fire hazard if everyone who claimed entry to it were still milling there, hunting for the tell-tale "Rosebud" - here a dying brother, there a pony not given, a stilling mother, a brutal father: a generally rotten childhood.

Stephen Ambrose, with refreshing simplicity, argues that Nixon's childhood was pretty good for its time, one in which he was supported and successful from the outset. Many people lose siblings, or get shouted at by querulous fathers, and survive. If there was something wrong with Nixon, we cannot blame the missing pony. Ambrose is willing to grant that there was something wrong with Nixon, all right - he lacked most of the notes in the gamut of human emotions. Whole octaves were dead, though he tried to take them: he was only partly there. He had no real friends, just Pat (whom he sometimes had difficulty recognizing), his daughters, and some flunkies (Babe Rebozo, Robert Abplanalp, Rose Woods). All of them, not accidentally, were useful to his political career, and devoted to it, at least most of the time. That was their connection to him, who was devoted to it fulltime.

Deprived of some of the normal emotional apparatus, Nixon responded with a hypertrophy of the remaining part - his political skills, obsessions, fears and information. This gave him the freakish fascination that attended his public life. Ambrose recognizes all of this. But he wisely does not pretend to explain why some people are born lacking affect, just as others are born lacking legs. He makes the proper response, of pity for the lack and admiration for the compensatory achievements.

Thus Ambrose's book is full of valuable correctives, as well as plain good history well told. As the leading authority on Dwight Eisenhower's presidency, he comes to his task with a reserve of knowledge about American politics, and especially about the Republican party of the post-war world, that makes him ideally qualified to chart the partisan strife in which Eisenhower used Nixon as his cat's-paw.

Yet there is a good deal of special pleading in the book, as if Ambrose were a lawyer trying to build up sympathy for an embarrassing client. There is palpable relief when he can present Nixon in the Navy as some one liked by his fellows (though none remained a friend after the war). We get imagined scenes of camaraderie in which Nixon learned to drink coffee, and play poker. "The innocent Quaker boy was coming into his manhood," Ambrose traces Nixon's political skills more to those poker games than to explicit tips from his early political handlers, and waxes strangely mystical on the subject: "Poker is the quintessential man's game, and in the Navy, in wartime, it reaches its highest form as a test of will and nerve." Apparently the Army plays sissy poker. Even Navy coffee, according to Ambrose, has a "specially potent caffeine course, making fellow addiction to it a form of male bonding." Caffeine was indeed the fuel that got the Navy through World War II.

Ambrose actually traces Nixon's tropism for crisis to the way poker favours (especially among perpetual coffee drinkers) "a nervous system that responds best to tension". It is true that Nixon, though not an athlete, liked the oddly impersonal intimacy and sideline male competitiveness of the locker-room, and the ships he served on were in some way floating locker rooms. But Ambrose seems to be finding his own exculpatory "Rosebud" when he claims that Nixon acquired his taste for crisis by "becoming a man" at the "stud poker" table, earning the respect of his buddies.

The special pleading takes several forms.

We are told repeatedly that others were just as bad, or almost. Helen Gahagan Douglas ran a dirty campaign, too. The press treated Nixon viciously, as if he were another would-be McCarthy, though Nixon carefully avoided most of McCarthy's extremes. If he tried to keep moderate Republicans happy, it was at the bidding of Eisenhower, who kept them inside the camp to contain their damage. These are all valid points, but they miss the obvious political impact of Nixon, the particular edge of danger he brought to political encounters. He elicited supportive bitternesses, raising the emotional temperature around him, giving him his political aura, one that attracted and repelled with equal voltage.

Ambrose himself responds to that aura while downplaying it. Thus he is not content to argue, convincingly, that Alger Hiss was a spy and a traitor as well as a perjured man. He enters into some of Nixon's own resentment of Hiss's privileged circle of defenders. Of Dean Acheson defending Hiss, Ambrose heatedly writes: "His phony British accent, his striped pants, his condescending attitude toward American congressmen, his supercilious manner, that silly howler hat, all put people off." Nixon's own picture of himself as the champion of the "little people" is given a more sophisticated statement by Ambrose, who continually places him in the ideological spectrum as the spokesperson for "small-business men" (his emphatic hyphen).

None the less, Ambrose tells the complicated Hiss story very well, with a full awareness of its ironies (to be traced in his second volume, on the Nixon presidency). Nixon saw the fight over Hiss not as a struggle with communism, but with a President and a Justice Department covering up their own lapses. Nixon used the FBI against its superiors in the White House and the Attorney General's office, attacking every form of executive confidentiality, taking leaks from the FBI and giving them to the press, using any publicity gimmick he could to make the President accountable for his own administration. The twists that lie ahead in the story are just hinted at here. In 1951, Nixon tried to get a college professor fired because he wrote in defence of Hiss. Twenty-one years later, Nixon would hire that professor, Charles Alan Wright, as one of his Watergate defenders, the one who reluctantly handed over

Watergate tapes to Judge John J. Sirica.

The Hiss case, shrewdly conducted by Nixon, made lightning play around him all the rest of his life. It also gave him an intoxicating experience of crisis, with all the rush of emotions normally denied him. Ambrose rightly says, "Nixon wrote about crises the way some men wrote about a religious experience, others about combat, still others about sexual conquests." In all his crises, Nixon went sleepless, experienced elation, blew up in outrageous bursts of temper. (At one minor mishap, recounted by Bob Haldeman, Nixon was seated behind his aide Don Hughes in a campaign car. Suddenly he "began to kick the back of Hughes's seat with both feet. And he wouldn't stop! Thump! Thump! Thump! The seat and the hapless Hughes jolted forward jaggedly as



Nixon vented his rage." When the car stopped at an intersection, Hughes just got out of the car and started walking off in a daze.)

Nixon had become addicted to crisis, as stimulant, as proof of worth, as a way to break into a fuller life of the emotions than the normally restricted range of them he had to play with. Caffeine, even in the Navy, was never like this. Not even poker was. He would live

seeking crisis, with an air of the gunfighter about him, making it apparent that politics was to him a blood sport. Though the Hiss case launched Nixon as a political star, Ambrose notes that he always presented himself as its victim rather than its beneficiary. He traced any subsequent hostility he encountered back to The Case. That way, he could treat the whole rest of his life as a prolongation of that excruciatingly satisfying agony.

Thus it is a little misleading for Ambrose to plod through the daily rounds of good deeds Nixon did as a dutiful party workhorse, setting a decent record on civil rights, leaning more to the internationalist wing of his party than to the Asia-firsters misleadingly called isolationists, becoming the most active and effective Vice-President of modern times. That is not what Nixon meant to the people who voted for or against him. In being more "responsible" than McCarthy, Nixon helped make the cold war myths more long-lived (myths he would have to subvert secretly in his later Chinese diplomacy). While revealing the lies of Alger Hiss, Nixon helped popularize the turgid apocalypticism of Whittaker Chambers. He ran in 1968 - where he (with Spiro Agnew) and George Wallace with Curtis Lemmy won a combined 57 per cent of the American votes - promising to "bring us together". Instead, he launched a wave of repressive measures out of John Mitchell's Justice Department. But that is jumping ahead of the story contained in this volume, which takes us only to 1962.

Ambrose is very good at what happened during those years, but he leaves out the high batsqueak signals that were the music to his text. Perhaps what is missing here is best suggested by something Patrick Buchanan said recently. Buchanan, the last loyalist to turn out the lights when leaving Nixon's Watergate administration, had just left Reagan's Inmate administration, when he told me: "Henry Kissinger and I were just comparing notes after we met, separately, with Nixon. You have to talk with Nixon every now and then to remember what a complicated experience it is. With Reagan, what you see is what you get; he is the same in private as in public. But when you talk alone with Nixon, there is so much happening at so many levels. What you get" - and here he grinned with relish - "is the sweetheart of the tapes."

American Holidays is filled with this kind of esoteric lore, which has always delighted folklorists and antiquarians. Their book also contains much less esoteric information about the holidays all Americans do know - New Year's, Washington and Lincoln's birthdays, Easter, Memorial Day, The Fourth of July, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Election Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas - as well as about "calendar customs" like Ground Hog's Day (Candlemas) and April Fool's Day. They also include all Jewish holidays, the Chinese New Year and the Vietnamese Tet, the Islamic Muharram, the Hopi Powamu Festival (which dramatizes the arrival of the clan ancestors), Buddha's birthday, Obon (the Japanese Festival of the Dead) and the Hindu Dewali (Festival of Lights).

Getting through *The Folklore of American Holidays* is dizzying work. Cohen and Coffin have not so much edited a book as excerpted from doctoral dissertations, articles in academic journals and newspapers, archives and private collections, with no apparent regard for their age, context or authority. They claim to have used two criteria for inclusion: that the festival would continue to be celebrated if there were no commercial or legal reasons for doing so; and that the festival has "its own set of traditions". Since neither criterion is really defined or justified, anything that appealed to the editors seems to have been included. The length of entries would appear to depend entirely on how much has been written about a particular holiday, and not on the relative importance of that holiday, its symbolic significance, its social and ritual resonances, its spiritual depth. Every holiday is the equivalent of every other holiday: a bit of flattened folklore, like one of those Middle American bumper stickers.

In a brief introduction, the editors discuss

calendrical festivities in that Frazerian mode (spiced by a little Freud) which has been so popularized that it is now a kind of contemporary folklore itself. "The phenomenon of the seasons is almost always embodied in a god-force which is born each year, grows strong, weakens, and dies, only to be replaced by a new god-force"; in the spring, Missouri and Pennsylvania Germans "worship phallic symbols such as the maypole". The model is so compelling for Cohen and Coffin that it prevents them from asking questions about the role of holidays in a society as ethnically complex, as mobile, and yet as regionally diverse, as secularized and as religious, as the United States. What is, of course, striking about American holidays is how few of them are truly national and - to the European at least - how seldom they are days of work.

The Folklore of American Holidays is basically a dictionary of festivals and calendar customs, and will appeal to readers as such. It will provide holiday celebrators with lore to enrich a dimming tradition but, as is often the case in folklore studies, will not do much to enhance their understanding - certainly at a spiritual level - of what they celebrate. This sort of understanding demands a social and cultural context which is missing here. Still, those of us who, despite our theoretical and methodological reservations, cannot resist a good tale or a neat rite, will find them in abundance in Cohen and Coffin. People in Maryland used to say that if a girl killed her mouth with pigs and needles and ran around the town square on Halloween, she would then be able to see her future husband in the mirror - or a coffin, if she was not to marry. If you keep an egg laid on Good Friday for a hundred years, a certain Mrs Bosworth from Long Beach, Mississippi, says, the yolk will turn into a diamond. In 1976, she had an egg that was over thirty years old.

Looking for a foundation

David Hirson

ARTHUR MILLER
Timebends: A life
599pp. Methuen, £17.95.
0413414809

Arthur Miller has written an autobiography which is as much a moral treatise as a memoir. In *Timebends* he blames the decline of his popularity in America on deteriorating cultural values: with it he seeks implicitly to upbraid those revisionist critics who would deny the author of *All My Sons*, *Death of a Salesman* and *The Crucible* his rightful place in the pantheon. The book, it would appear, is Miller's attempt to provide the solid ground on which his reputation may finally rest secure.

This preoccupation with the way that others see him stems from a life dominated by a fear of collapse. His childhood of "sublime confidence" was undermined when the Crash of 1929 drove his family from Manhattan to Brooklyn, from prosperity to the hardships of the Great Depression. The stock market, he says, "had carried for a great many middle-class people the prestige of capitalism itself": its failure spelled the disintegration of an entire mythos. Americans suddenly began to ask "What is real?", and, in his autobiography, Miller continually repeats the question as his life seesaws between security and peril, giving the book a meandering, palimpsest-like structure in which events separated by decades are juxtaposed: only the desire for order remains constant. "I deeply wanted to be one", Miller writes, "not divided, to speak with the same

voice in private and publicly." As in his plays, personal and political matters seem to converge. Miller equates the Jewish-Catholic alliance of his first marriage to Mary Slattery with the idealistic socialism of his youth: both promised "collective security" against narrow-mindedness and fascism. It becomes apparent that Miller is more than anxious to extract cosmic meaning from commonplace occurrences, as when he celebrates "life and death and transformation" in the grinding of a horseradish; decisions for him are "volcanic"; plays are "my creation". Even trivial, infant misconceptions of reality assume importance because they are happening to a future writer. If Miller's vocation fortifies him against the slide into oblivion, his thundering avowal of the fact betrays a diffidence from an earlier age when "it was not so much death I feared as insignificance".

Timebends traces the rational creed which saves Miller from dreaded anonymity. His great-grandfather's storytelling endows him with a sense of continuity and tradition. Later, Greek tragedy shows him how past dominates present: he finds a "reassurance of order" in the universality of fate. "IT ALL COHERES!" he declares, quoting the hero's final line from Pound's translation of *Ajax*, and this becomes a rallying cry in art as well as life. Theatre should strip away illusions to reveal fundamental moral truths. "To possess the past", he concludes, "is to achieve importance." No theory, however, could have prepared him for the unprecedented success of *Death of a Salesman*. At thirty-four he was hailed as the conscience of a nation, and this, naturally, changed his life: "Such an order of recognition imprints its touch of arrogance".

he says, "quite as though one has new control of a new power, a power to make real everything one is capable of imagining." In Hollywood Miller meets Marilyn Monroe, whom he eventually marries. Their relationship introduces him to an altogether different kind of fame from that which he knew as a playwright. Fans and photographers jostle in alleyways to catch a glimpse of the couple; gossip about them fills tabloids on both sides of the Atlantic. "One can become public property in the most literal sense", he says of an experience which ultimately leaves him feeling more lonely and dispossessed than ever before.

Unable to prevent Monroe from self-destruction under the pressure of her sex-goddess image, Miller seems to have endured the end of his second marriage as yet another collapse in a life where security is consistently denied. The socialism of his youth, bright with the hope of "ideal unity", returns to haunt him in the McCarthy era when he is called to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Blacklists demonstrate the "tenuousness of human connection". His plays, critically acclaimed and commercially successful through the 1940s, begin to fail in one or both respects soon after, until finally his work is welcomed only by audiences abroad. In the new American non-society, he argues, "storytelling seemed old-fashioned; the Bomb had blown away credibility in all such continuities". He despairs of an avant-garde that celebrates disconnection instead of looking for moral truths rooted in the past. "The past", he says, "has simply ceased in our time."

Thus, Miller presents himself as the anachronistic Defender of Principle in a culture gone haywire. The tone of *Timebends* is

correspondingly lofty and in it, his is the voice not of an artist but of a ponderous exegete. Rhetoric abounds - "fame is the other side of loneliness"; "Woman, that worshipped, tortured species"; "girls, those innocent victims of male lust" - though occasionally Miller does do justice to his admirable and varied life: he writes well about Brooklyn in the Depression, and there are perceptive portraits of Norman Mailer, John Huston and Paula Strasberg. Too often, however, a didactic impulse sends his language skidding out of control. An otherwise amusing description of Clifford Odets, for instance, concludes with the observation that he, like Marilyn Monroe, was a "self-destructing babe in the woods absently combing back his hair with a loaded pistol".

Miller is either unable or unwilling to recognize that it is precisely this solemn grandiloquence which began, long ago, to diminish his plays. Fame is partly responsible: it seduced him into promoting answers to questions which formerly he had been content to illustrate. No less culpable, however, is an America which loves to create icons almost as much as it delights in destroying them. Tennessee Williams was apotheosized, then mercilessly condemned, and his autobiography expressed confusion and hurt. Miller's position is summed up in Charley's famous line about Willy in *Death of a Salesman*: "there is no rock bottom to the life . . . He's a man way out there in the blue, riding on a smile and a shoeshine; and when they start not smiling back - boy, that's an earthquake." Despite his extraordinary accomplishments, Miller is still looking for a foundation. That he felt it necessary to write a book like *Timebends* may tell us less about him than about America's treatment of its artists.

Set texts

Andrew Saint

DONALD ALBRECHT
Designing Dreams: Modern architecture in the movies
204pp. Thames and Hudson.
£20 (paperback, £10.95).
05001406X

Inigo Jones, the Bibiena dynasty and other masters of Renaissance scenery and pageantry are as famous for their stage sets and costumes as for their architecture. Why then has equal respect not been paid to the modern settings of films and their creators? So enquires Donald Albrecht in this sharp and entertaining study: "That movie designers were often as talented and successful as their architectural counterparts in creating modern designs is the premise of *Designing Dreams*".

Albrecht limits himself for good reasons to the classic black-and-white film age of the inter-war years. (There is an epilogue on *The Fountainhead*, the well-known King Vidor blockbuster of 1949 based on Ayn Rand's novel, but as this film is explicitly about architecture and architects it is in a sense in a category of its own.) In the earliest period of the industry, camera technique and the legacy of the stage meant that settings mostly conformed to the enclosed, static box with no great depth of field. Later on, further improvements in technique and quality of film, combined with the 1940s thirst for realism, broke the stranglehold of the set. The golden-age of the movie set belongs to the decades between. Not coincidentally, it was the golden age of the Modern Movement in architecture also; the two revolutions reinforced each other. Albrecht argues that the cinema had a vast influence in making modernism popular and acceptable. So much is unquestionable. He further asserts that films during this period took over from international exhibitions as the chief means of changing architectural taste. That may be to credit films and exhibitions alike with too much power, but both claims provoke thought.

Set designers in those days were a motley crew - the architectural equivalent of script-writers. Commonly interior decorators by background and aptitude, they flitted in and out of films as and when they were needed, providing settings to suit the whims of directors and producers. Modernism was most often



A still from Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927). The film's art directors were Otto Hunte, Erich Keelhus and Karl Vollbrecht. The photograph is reproduced from the book reviewed here.

promoted, says Albrecht, as a means of looking the popular urge towards make-believe and envy, no doubt on the Aristotelian principle that we are most moved by events in the lives of those who are larger and loftier than ourselves. A modern setting, meaning usually a plush, "streamlined" interior rather than the austere, empty white box of the type emanating from the puritan architects of France and Germany, denoted riches and a life-style then unattainable by most of the viewing public. But though a persistent theme in films, it was never dominant. In the Hollywood studios the design teams were always subservient, concocting sets to order in the style of the moment. As a rule

the less serious the subject, the flashier the background, as for instance in RKO's *Astaire and Rogers* series.

For these reasons, few designers for the cinema took their modernism wholly seriously. An early exception was Robert Mallet-Stevens, who did much to establish the modern setting in the French films of the 1920s with which Albrecht's story essentially begins. Mallet-Stevens had been hardly behind Le Corbusier in promulgating white-box architecture and built uncompromisingly in this style for the Paris Exhibition of 1925, when most designers were toying with the delights of Art Deco. He was one of a strong team (including Léger) to

contribute sets to *L'Inhumaine* of 1924, a landmark in the development of the subject, and wrote a tract called *Le Décor moderne au cinéma*. But ideologues like Mallet-Stevens had no permanent future in films. When for instance Alexander Korda tried to bring in the Bauhaus designer Moholy-Nagy to design the sets for his ambitious *Things To Come* (1936), they turned out too abstract and Korda had to call in his brother Vincent instead. The clever Russian-born graphic designer Romain de Tiroff, alias Erté, proved not much more compromising when lured to Hollywood by MGM in the 1920s. Perhaps the happiest collaboration of this kind was the involvement in films of the Viennese-New Yorker Joseph Urban, whose talents are handsomely recovered from oblivion in Albrecht's pages. Urban had much to do with the flowering of Art Deco in New York in the 1920s, and designed prolifically in every imaginable style for both stage (the Ziegfeld Follies) and screen (Hearst's Cosmopolitan Productions).

By 1930 Hollywood had got its set designers under control. The central chapter of Albrecht's book describes the organization and typical house-styles of Paramount, RKO and MGM, the three studios which made something of a speciality of the modern set. Paramount's films are typified by an "elegant architectural sensibility", RKO's by "energetic decorative qualities", while MGM under its art director Cedric Gibbons achieved the best balance, judges Albrecht. With so many striking images to show and foolish plots to précis, the text from this point shows some tendency to degenerate into a series of examples. Hints are dropped, and more might have been said, about the various devices employed to achieve design effects, for instance the types of false perspective and illumination used in films to increase a sense of openness, space and light, and the dropping of beams at the top of sets to exaggerate horizontality - all qualities prized in modern architecture. The last chapter reviews the typical interior settings for the "modern" Hollywood film of the 1930s (office, liner, nightclub, skyscraper, bathroom, and so on), and contains some straightforward social commentary on their connotations. But by this time Albrecht's main purpose is complete. He has struck a rich and neglected vein in film history. When others follow him, as they certainly will do, one hopes they will show equal zeal and discrimination.

كتاب في الفن

A dynasty's dabblings

Celina Fox

JANE ROBERTS
Royal Artists: From Mary Queen of Scots to
the present day
234pp. Grafton. £17.95.
0246 130156

One of the principal benefits to be derived from painting as an occupation, according to Hazlitt, is its capacity to keep one out of trouble: "Innocence is joined with industry, pleasure with business; and the mind is satisfied, though it is not engaged in thinking or doing any mischief." That royalty greatly enjoyed the pastime might have brought relief to generations of courtiers, ministers and servants of the crown; indeed, it must have been tempting to encourage its more widespread adoption by those royals otherwise inclined to dabble in affairs of greater moment to the nation.

Jane Roberts, curator of the print room at the Royal Library, Windsor Castle, diplomatically refrains from exploring these avenues of speculation. Certainly her subjects cannot be expected to have regarded their efforts in such a cynical light. Queen Victoria's daughter, Princess Louise, arguably the most talented artist included here, called her fellow former students at the Royal College of Art in 1923 with an idealistic vision of inner inspiration: "the joy of receiving and absorbing beauty and creating it afresh". Her parents were firm believers in the superiority of draughtsmanship to craft-based skills. Prince Albert moreover advancing the view that trying to learn the rudiments of art would enable him to judge and appreciate the works of others. Their eldest daughter, the Princess Royal, concluded that although art could not in their position be the

chief object in life, "it may be - and I think it ought to be - its chief recreation".

Hazlitt's observation that when one is painting "The hours pass away untold, without chagrin, and without weariness" is confirmed by royal experience. Queen Victoria, in particular, turned to art for therapy following the death of the Prince Consort. Although she lugubriously inscribed her sketchbooks, "The 1st year of my misery", "the 2nd year of my Great Sorrow" and so on, letters quoted from her then art teacher, William Leighton Leitch, report her remarking on how quickly time passed when she was sketching outdoors. Art must have saved many royal ladies from going mad with boredom, or at least helped to disguise their condition. Having detailed the extraordinary range of arts and crafts - painting, sketching, print-making, "botanizing" in the shape of flora Delanica as well as plant studies, painting on velvet, porcelain and furniture, lacquer-work, silhouette-cutting and other forms of paper-work, knotting, fancy needlework, beadwork and netting - undertaken by the daughters of George III, Mrs Roberts observes that they "were able to devote so much time to their artistic pursuits because there was very little else for them to do".

By the nineteenth century, these pursuits had acquired a utilitarian gloss. The results came in useful as birthday and Christmas presents and were certainly cheaper than Fabergé eggs (although a granddaughter of Queen Victoria, Princess Marie Louise, learnt enamelling and, according to her own account, produced Fabergé jewellery indistinguishable from the real thing). No society charity bazaar was complete without some example of royal handiwork. As Crown Princess of Prussia, the Princess Royal supported Prussian troops wounded during the war with Denmark and their depen-

dants by painting patriotic pictures of soldiers, reproduced as lithographs for sale. And later, the remarkable "Queen Mary's carpet", comprising over a million stitches worked by Her Majesty during her sojourn at Badminton during the Second World War, was donated to a committee to raise funds in dollars for the relief of the post-war National Debt. (Its sale to the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire and subsequent tour round North America in 1950 made nearly \$120,000 for the British Exchequer.)

The artistic activities of the royal men rest on more solidly practical foundations. As Mrs Roberts points out, Castiglione's Courtier was urged not to neglect the noble and worthy art of painting, from which many useful skills could be derived, not least for military purposes. Charles I's nephew, Prince Rupert, mastered the art of perspective as part of his military training; he also introduced the technique of mezzotint to England and is credited with the invention of the mezzotint rocker. George III was the first British sovereign for over a hundred years to take an interest in the arts and as a young man was taught the grammar of architecture by Sir William Chambers. If George IV was more successful than his father in realizing his building projects, there is less evidence that he himself possessed any talents as a draughtsman. The only drawing included here is a youthful effort - a hussar costume for a birthday masquerade - which perhaps serves to anticipate his greatest art work, his own coronation. Prince Albert's legacy was, typically, more durable. The lawsuit he brought against a Windsor publisher for having produced a catalogue of etchings by the Queen and Prince without permission resulted in a tightening up of the law on artistic copyright. The impact of the royal family in the present century appears rather tame by com-

parison. In his foreword Prince Philip expresses the opinion that "we have all done it for fun" and the book ends with an account of the Prince of Wales's painting in watercolours, "I love it because I feel one can express a great deal through it - if it works."

To give them their due, the royal artists are far from boastful about their accomplishments. Queen Victoria wrote to Crown Prince Frederick to dissuade her from attempting oils on the grounds that watercolours could be kept in books or portfolios, but "Amateurs can never paint in oils like artists and what can one do with all one's productions?" The Princess dismissed her own efforts as "lamentable *hors d'oeuvre* and wretched dilettantism". Mrs Roberts, nevertheless, unearths a fair amount of sycophancy on the part of royal drawing masters. Even Ruskin succumbed when confronted with a request from Princess Alice to lend her some drawings which she could copy. "So of course I asked if I might make them for her and give them to her, and of course she was good enough to be pleased." The drawings submitted to him in return for criticism were "in truth of extreme beauty, showing not only very high natural gifts for art, but an energy and patient industry which would be singular and admirable in any woman...". Mrs Roberts, on the whole, remains blessedly free of such nonsense, confining her judgments to a tactful "charming" or "modest (but accomplished)", conceding that the royal family are, and have always been, considerably more important as patrons and collectors than as artists. As an analysis of the leisure habits of royalty, *Royal Artists* certainly pulls its punches. But it is an attractively produced, diligently compiled scrapbook relating to a family of peculiar fascination to many, and on these grounds alone it will no doubt have plenty of admirers.

Ripping time

Patricia Highsmith

COLIN WILSON and ROBIN ODELL
Jack the Ripper: Summing up and verdict
319pp. Bantam. £12.95.

MARTIN HOWELLS and KEITH SKINNER
The Ripper Legacy: The life and death of Jack the Ripper
209pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £12.95.

DEBORAH CAMERON and ELIZABETH FRAZER

The Lust to Kill: A feminist investigation of sexual murder
206pp. Oxford: Polity. £25

(paperback, £7.95).

07456 03351

MARTIN FIDO

The Crimes, Detection and Death of Jack the Ripper
241pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £10.95.

0297 791362

MELVIN HARRIS

Jack the Ripper: The bloody truth
192pp. Columbus. £14.95.

086287 3282

Who was Jack the Ripper? We all know what he did - murdered at least five women in the Whitechapel area of London in 1888 - but just who was he? Despite the spate of books that has already started to appear to commemorate the Ripper's centennial in 1988, and the retelling of gory details with maps and street-names, and an argument for three different Rippers in as many books, the Ripper's identity has not yet been conclusively proven. The always daring and fascinating Colin Wilson, with his co-writer Robin Odell, deals in *Jack the Ripper: Summing up and verdict* with the possibility of Montague John Druit being the Ripper, and dismisses it with some evidence and more psychology. Wilson and Odell venture no opinion as to the Ripper's identity. Martin Howells and Keith Skinner's *The Ripper Legacy* offers the richest and most fascinating argument for Druit's guilt, in that the story is accompanied by a cover-up by Druit's brother William, and Druit's suicide by drowning (which the authors believe was murder) caused "the authorities" to close the book at once on the Ripper quest. Druit's well-attired corpse, with stones in the overcoat pockets, was found in the Thames only yards from the Osiers, a private house in Chiswick used by the Apostles, the Cambridge club to which the Duke of Clarence belonged. Druit's family is said to have believed him to be the Ripper, yet his brother was supposed to possess information which "clearly pointed to his innocence". This puzzle will tax the brain of the best armchair sleuth. To have Druit killed, labelled as the Ripper, would have relieved the minds of several persons on the police force and possibly in higher places. The individuals investigating the murder of Druit, while believing that he was guilty, "also wanted to protect the Royal Family, so withheld vital information not only from the public, but also the City and Metropolitan police force".

To play with the Ripper mystery is simply to play at whodunit in an eerily gas-lit London, with real female victims with real names. The question for society should be not so much who the Ripper was as why his type keeps recurring, and mainly in Western countries. In the case of Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper, we know who did it, and consequently know what kind of man a Ripper is or might be. Thanks to several books, most notably Gordon Burn's *Somebody's Husband, Somebody's Son*, we know all an outsider can know about Sutcliffe's childhood, family life, siblings, education and marriage. Marriage, yes: Children, all had lowly jobs if any, and couldn't make ends meet without taking to the street. But "fallen" implies falling into the lap of pleasure with his own wife, who was the soul of discretion when replying to police questions about any and all of her husband's doings. In the forty which he drove, Sutcliffe had a self-made sign pinned up, saying, essentially: "I have great powers which if unleashed would make the world sit up and take notice. Outwardly, Sutcliffe conformed, but he had his fantasy life."

"I were just cleaning up streets", said Sutcliffe finally to his brother Carl, who had never suspected Peter Sutcliffe was a Ripper type, in

that prostitutes were his special targets, and he aimed for the breasts, the genitals, cut them off or stabbed them with a screwdriver, shoved "a plank" up one, used whatever was handy. Such men (one does not find the same syndrome in women attacking men, for instance) basically dislike women and consider them dirty, maybe sinful, "temptresses", maybe spreaders of disease. It is significant in Sutcliffe's history that he had a habit of visiting an old wax museum in Morecambe, which had life-sized headless and limbless torsos of women from beginning to end of pregnancy: their abdomens were laid open, so that the development of the foetus could be studied, but according to Burn:

Time, however, has eroded definition and basted the developing foetuses and the glistening ropes of internal organs to a uniform orange-blood colour; the impression is of gaping wounds around the umbilicus, growing progressively bigger, gorier and more congealed. The description of the vagina is even more distasteful. It is easy to imagine Peter Sutcliffe staring at these female innards (or the unidentified Jack the Ripper staring nearly a hundred years earlier at something similar in some other museum, a display of wax models of sex organs damaged by venereal disease, for instance, in which the Victorians are said to have shown great interest) and convincing himself that women, prostitutes in particular, were of special danger to menfolk who plunge their private parts into them. As for that, Sutcliffe himself couldn't completely make it. One prostitute with whom he had tried, before marriage, called him "useless", another had said "get on with it", and still another had not returned the five-quick change due to Sutcliffe from a ten-pound note, and all that rankled, deeply.

According to a new and timely book, *The Lust to Kill* by Deborah Cameron and Elizabeth Frazer, every infant male or female begins life with ambiguity in regard to the mother, raging when she is not there, happy when she returns and gives her breast. And the authors remark that the path toward socially approved heterosexual love and affection is a tricky one with many deviations. Then, too, the influence of the Christian Church in Western society further complicates the attitude toward sexual intercourse and sexual freedom. (Sex is at once holy, a pleasure and a sin. The Christian Churches in the main seem terrified of sex, and perhaps for good reason: sex is more powerful than anything the Church has to offer, except of course to a few rare ascetic types.) It is known that Sutcliffe, and one may assume Jack the Ripper (perhaps middle-class and respectable in appearance), went to church now and then in childhood and youth. In church, one is made acquainted with the Virgin Mary, further to cloud the thinking or imagining of a young boy. Mary had to be a virgin or - the alternative is sin, and sin is unthinkable in this case. Or it is implied that such sin ought to be unthinkable.

At the same time, men and gentlemen visited whores in Whitechapel and in Sutcliffe's red light district in Yorkshire, because an orgasm with a strange woman picked their egos up. But from the Ripper's point of view (even the idea of sexual intercourse with anyone, wife or whore, must have been ambiguous as to moral evaluation, perhaps dirty and distasteful. It is interesting that Sutcliffe is said to have achieved a climax while stabbing one of his victims (with knife or screwdriver) although from the account it seems that he had not tried to penetrate her.

The nineteenth century, Jack the Ripper's, provided us with a rich moralistic vocabulary, some of which has been handed down. The poverty-stricken (mostly part-time) streetwalkers of Whitechapel were "fallen women" who ought to be lifted up; maybe by the Church. Actually, they needed fourpence for a doss-house bed or for some bread and cheese. A couple of the Ripper's victims had small children, all had lowly jobs if any, and couldn't make ends meet without taking to the street. But "fallen" implies falling into the lap of pleasure and self-indulgence, into a total relaxation of morals, resulting in what was labelled sin. (A comment by a member of the court at the trial of Sutcliffe was to the effect that a really regrettable fact was that one of his victims was not a prostitute.) "In a patriarchal culture," say the authors of *The Lust to Kill*,

where Man has been able to make himself the pover-

sal subject, has had the power of representing himself and the world, the ambivalent feelings evoked by sexuality - pleasure and danger, desire and disgust - are projected onto a female figure, the prostitute who is simultaneously an object of desire and an object of contempt. The prostitute here functions as an archetype: she represents the sexual aspect of all women. So the ambivalent responses the prostitute calls forth are part of men's feelings about women in general. The desire to kill prostitutes is thus not sharply distinct from sadism: it is another outcome of the same conflation of sex, transgression, hatred and death.

Yes, sadism plays a part in Ripper types. It was suspected that Jack was a doctor who carried chloroform, enabling him to silence his victims while getting on with his business of penetrating (maybe), maiming and disembowelling, indeed taking whole organs out neatly, breasts on a near-by table, and all this in "close quarters" with the neighbours in adjacent rooms who never heard an outcry. Another sadistic theory: strangulation while having intercourse, which some women are said to accept (up to a point, of course); some are known even to have made another date with the same man (according to Colin Wilson and Robin Odell).

Within six hours of the murder of Mary Jane Kelly (last of Jack the Ripper's victims), Montague John Druit was playing cricket on Rectory field at Blackheath, where he taught in a private school. He was extremely depressed by his mother's decline into insanity, and drowned a short time after Kelly's death, after which there were no more "Ripper" murders. Sir Melville MacNaghton preferred to believe Druit was the Ripper. Druit was not a doctor as MacNaghton thought, but a failed barrister, or at least one without a diploma, a bachelor, possibly a homosexual, a member of the Apostles. Colin Wilson, for example, and also Melvin Harris (who opts for Dr Roslyn D'Onston as the Ripper), like Colin Wilson, believes that there is not enough evidence to substantiate Druit's guilt.

In *The Crimes, Detection and Death of Jack the Ripper*, Martin Fido makes the case for a Jewish tailor called David Cohen, residing in the East End. Again the reader will have to

Flawed idol

N. A. M. Rodger

TOMPOCOCK
Horatio Nelson
364pp. Bodley Head. £15.
0370 311248

The fact that there are over 200 lives of Nelson is always a reason for writing another - not from the publisher's belief that a book is generally more profitable when others have aroused interest in the subject, but simply as a testimony to the extraordinary fascination of the man himself. In an age when kings and prime ministers could easily walk the streets unrecognized, Nelson in his last years attracted immediate crowds whenever he appeared, and received the instant adulation which in our day has been given only to a handful of pop-singers. For a member of the notoriously silent service, who passed the great part of his career away from his country, this was doubly extraordinary. We know from a celebrated anecdote that Wellington, with his distinctive profile, already prime minister, could still be mistaken in the street; when Nelson left the country for the last time a large body of troops had to make a path to the landing-place through the adoring crowds. He was forty-seven, and had been known to the general public for only eight years.

The great strength and attraction of this new life of Nelson is the portrayal of his complex and contradictory character. He had so many opposite faces, and so many which were embarrassing or repugnant, that biographers have always had trouble presenting a coherent picture of the man. Without risking the treacherous shoals of amateur psychology, without any extensive piecemeal analysis, Tom Pocock presents a complete and completely believable Nelson. The Nelson who abandoned a loving and loyal wife for public adultery with that of his best friend, the Nelson who dishonoured an armistice to hand over several thousand men and women to a ghastly death,

stretch his imagination, but don't we all when reading mystery and adventure stories? Fido allies Cohen to Nathan Kaminsky, a suspect at the time, and says that a Yiddish accent, plus mumbling in the court, could turn Nathan into David and Kamin into the more familiar Cohen. The book is well-documented and highly readable.

Melvin Harris, in *Jack the Ripper: The bloody truth*, takes the attitude that the Ripper has been sensationalized, evidence falsified or invented, and he names names. In Harris's suspect D'Onston, we get into the elegant mystic. D'Onston contributed unsigned articles to the popular press, but the ones that Harris has traced deal with black magic and the Whitechapel murders. D'Onston's photograph shows a handsome man with greying hair, handlebar moustache and intelligent eyes, and if one had to guess, one might say he was a doctor or lawyer. D'Onston (born Robert Donston Stephenson in 1841 in Yorkshire) did indeed claim medical degrees taken in France and the United States. As a character he is far from boring, and among his activities was drug-taking. He teased the public and his friends with "Do you know who the Ripper really is?" Then there is even "the tell-tale box" with "proof of the Ripper's identity" in it - D'Onston's own trunk, opened after his death. Can it be that there was more than one Ripper operating in 1888?

There have been Rippers before Jack, and there will be more in the future. The role of women in our society is still seen by many males and some females in a skewed way, and this is handed down to the male children, and to the girls too, though that has caused less mayhem. (The nearest to a female serial murderer is Myra Hindley, and it is said that this was more spectator than agent.) The Ripper disease is one like Parkinson's or multiple sclerosis, striking the university graduate as likely as the manual labourer, and producing predictable symptoms. Rippers lead double lives and take a long time to be caught. That is because they believe they are doing the right thing, and look like everybody else.

Keeping to the canon

Philip Conisbee

LORENZ EITNER
An Outline of 19th Century European Painting
456pp. Harper and Row. £17.95.
018 4329763

Lorenz Eitner's *An Outline of 19th Century European Painting* is packed with information and a lot of good sense but is ultimately disappointing. Professor Eitner is best known for his life's work on Géricault and on that great artist he has written one of the finest monographs of our time (1983). This is the genre of art-historical writing with which he is evidently comfortable and he does it supremely well. The present book contains a series of potted biographies and this sort of an account, in 1987, seems very old-fashioned. (There is a brief general introduction on art and the En-

lightenment, another on Impressionism, and a short chapter on academic art and the Salon; but otherwise there is little to link the discreet biographies, and many an "issue" of nineteenth-century art is avoided.) On a pattern ultimately derived from Vasari's *Vite*, Professor Eitner promotes his heroes - the predictable canon of Romantics, Realists and Impressionists - while artists of other persuasions are slighted or omitted. Although Eitner admits to his own "attitudes, and perhaps prejudices", anything that pretends, as this book explicitly does, to be a student survey of the period should include the Nazarenes, the Pre-Raphaelites and some discussion of other forms of non-classical "primitive" revivalism, for example. Wilkie, in practice and in theory, offers a key to so much nineteenth-century painting of genre and bourgeois life. British nineteenth-century art is represented here by Constable and Turner and by excessive attention to Blake, while there is a short nostalgic

section on the British Neo-classicists; German art for Eitner is Runge and Friedrich and there is no mention of later developments by artists such as Menzel.

What were the functions of different types of painting in the nineteenth century and how were they woven into the fabric of society? What was the art market? What were the different publics for art and how did they perceive it? What dominant and reactive contemporary ideologies does the art embody? There are countless interesting questions now being asked about nineteenth-century art - not that a social history of art is anything new - and it is perverse to ignore the social, economic and political upheavals of the period and their implications for the variety of artists and their art. This book would have been just the right place for a discussion of the historiography of the period, which was itself so historically self-conscious, and the time is right and readers are ready, now that the older modes of connois-

seurship and the varieties of "empirical" art history are being challenged by the younger scholars of the so-called "new" art history. The very notion of artistic genius was so developed and promoted in the period covered by this book, that it cries out to be addressed, rather than accepted as natural in its application to the canonical heroes of the "modern movement".

By those following - and teaching - survey courses of nineteenth-century art, Eitner's book will frequently be consulted to check a date or the outline of an artist's career. The author sketches in some historical background, notably when he discusses the history of the *École des Beaux-Arts*, Salon exhibitions, and how the changing political situation affected the formal structure of the art world. But he ignores the challenging approaches to the period which have been developed by younger scholars during the past fifteen years or so.

How it was done

Enriqueta Harris

ZAHIRA VELIZ (Editor and translator)
Artists' Techniques in Golden Age Spain: Six treatises in translation
224pp. Cambridge University Press. £32.50.
0521 330090

The growing interest shown by historians of art as well as restorers and conservators in the artist's working processes, techniques and materials makes this publication very opportune. Zahira Veliz, a practicing picture restorer, has selected texts that are most likely to serve the needs and interests of technicians, who cannot be expected to know the language of every school of painting they handle.

The texts - not necessarily complete treatises - are all by painters and are closely concerned with artistic practices in Andalusia and Madrid, the chief centres of art in the Golden Age. The earliest by the little-known Felipe Gomez, published in Lisbon in Portuguese (where Portugal belonged to the Spanish Crown) and never reprinted, provides a practical guide to pictorial techniques. Although

rarity is a recently discovered anonymous tract, dated by Veliz to about 1636 and probably of Andalusian origin. This is a kind of painter's primer, with descriptions of instruments, ingredients and their usage; here the text is accompanied by illustrations of paintings of artists at work, and displaying the colours on their palettes. José García Hidalgo's short treatise on painting (1693) includes recipes for etching and is notable for the numerous instructive illustrations by his own hand, some of which are reproduced. The remaining authors are better known as both writers and painters, though they have more often been quoted for their art theories and the biographical and historical data they provide than for their accounts of artistic practices. The Italian-born Vicente Carducho devotes only a few pages of his *Diálogo de la Pintura* (1633) to the subject. In reproducing part of these Veliz observes that they "could serve as a syllabus outline for the first year course of a painting academy". By contrast, half a volume of the two-volume *Arte de la Pintura* (1649) of Francisco Pacheco, Velázquez's master and father-in-law, was concerned with the practice of painting and all its stages. Parts of this have

been previously translated by Jonathan Brown for art historians and elsewhere for restorers by Veliz. Here she can provide a much longer extract, though not of course Pacheco's whole view of the subject. The last treatise is by the Andalusian-born court painter Antonio Palomino, best known for the third volume of his encyclopaedic *Museo Pictórico* (1715-24), the *Spanish Parnassus* printed in abbreviated form in several languages. The extensive chapters on the practices of painting now provide the longest and most comprehensive text in this anthology.

Though much of this material is of wider interest, the editing as well as the selection of texts shows a greater concern for and familiarity with the interests of the restorer than of the art historian. In addition to a glossary of difficult terms, the notes are almost exclusively devoted to further discussion of these (terms and other technical problems, with little or no contextual/historical commentary). Veliz is obviously at home in Spanish and English. Yet she shows excessive caution in leaving many terms untranslated, in Italian, even when the meaning is given in the glossary or the English equivalent is obvious, for instance *imprima-*

dura, grotescos, retablo. Pacheco's death, given here as 1638, is now long known to have occurred in 1644, only five years before the publication of his *Arte*.

Like the notes, the selected bibliography and index are orientated towards the restorer. The index, regrettably, does not include artists named in the texts and whose works are even illustrated, such as Juan van der Hamen and Juan Martínez Montañés, famous master of painted wooden statues, which are the subject of a detailed description by Pacheco. In other ways too this book could have been made more serviceable. Some features, such as the placing of the notes for each chapter together, at the end of the texts without running heads, or the absence of a list of the thirty-nine well-chosen illustrations, are probably the fault of the publishers rather than the editor herself; so too perhaps are the many misprints and inconsistencies in spelling.

The North Carolina Museum of Art: Catalogue of the Spanish paintings (114pp. University of North Carolina Press. £12.70, 0 88259 952 6) is compiled by Edward J. Sullivan, who reattributed several works listed at the end

John Coatsworth

COMMENTARY

Naturally artful

David Nokes

Vanity Fair
BBC 1

At once intimate and superficial, television is the perfect medium for insincerity, and this autumn's literary serials have beguiled us with a charming succession of charlatans and con-men. With their charming smiles, hard-luck tales and plausible patter of promises, Patrick Hamilton's Ralph Gorse, Olivia Manning's Prince Yakimov and John le Carré's Ricky Pym trade in and on the same commodities of human gullibility and greed. Yet none of these surpasses the guileful arts of Thackeray's consummate charmer, Becky Sharp. For sixteen weeks her demure glances and winning smiles have offered the supreme examples of delightful insincerity on our screens.

Eve Matheson's performance as Becky is a masterpiece of detailed observation, conveying just the right sense of contrivance in each switch of tone from injured innocence to defiant modesty, from simulated indignation to coquettish confession. Her coy and tenuous features are exactly suited to the part, with eyes that moisten or shine on cue; but in particular she has a perfect nose for it. In the opening episode her gloriously defiant posture, hurling Johnson's "Dixie" from the carriage window, is performed with her nose in the air and a flush of victory spreading across her dimpled schoolgirl cheeks. Later, when she is challenged by impertinent underlings, her nostrils flare with haughty disdain. But when

she flirts with her elderly admirer Lord Steyne (John Shrapnel), whose face resembles a toothless wart-hog, her own features take on a porcine appearance, with pudgy cheeks and a flat snout, like a Circe in reverse, or one who has spent too much time at the trough.

Even without the aid of Dr Johnson's "Dixie", Becky's quick-witted verbal flourishes, mingling French and English with coquettish forwardness, or entertaining company with her mimicry, demonstrate a sophisticated command of the language of deceit. Her sparring relationship with George Osborne (Benedict Taylor) is neatly focused in an early episode by his condescending alertness to a false note of contrived ingenueness in her precise use of the pronoun "whom".

At sixteen episodes *Vanity Fair* is an ambitious production, and its success suggests that Thackeray's style may adapt better to the small screen than Dickens's. Television always has difficulties with Dickens's eccentricities and exuberance, and often leaves us with the uneasy sense that a pile of inconvenient metaphors has been left just out of camera-shot. But Thackeray's style of caricature depends upon the sort of visual detail, like Miss Pinkerton's turban or Sir Pitt's greasy neckcloth and threadbare wig, that works perfectly on screen. Alexander Baron's exclusion of the novel's narrator's voice with its nostalgic asides on coaching-inns and its persistent mock-homiletic interjections, does not seriously detract from the work's comic and satiric tone. The shaping of incidents and the attention to ironic details successfully create a sense of detached but fascinated amusement. Joss Sedley,

beautifully played by James Saxon, is a particularly well-observed character. We first catch sight of him as a broad, buckskinned backside bending over the fireplace. Thereafter he maintains a stately backwards progress through the serial, backing into rooms, backing out of difficulties (such as Becky's designs on him, or the battle of Waterloo) with the same embarrassed bluster of bluff monosyllables. His wardrobe must have put a considerable strain on the production budget, as, never appearing in the same outfit twice, he squeezes his portly frame into an ever more gaudy succession of Regency satins and velvets.

The military men are equally well presented, though the omission of the school-days episode linking Dobbin to George Osborne makes their subsequent friendship a little hard to comprehend. Jack Klaff as Rawdon Crawley creates the impression of a man whose manhood is all mannerism. Appearing at first full of military braggadocio, sporting a lavish moustache, he seems a dashing and dangerous Lothario. "The wolf is upon the lamb", comments his aunt Mathilda, observing his amorous manoeuvres with Becky. But Rawdon is a sheep in wolf's clothing and only too easily fleeced. His culminating humiliation occurs, appropriately, in the mock-postal villanelle where, dressed as a shepherdess, he acts as a comic foil for his wife Becky's tensely public love-song to Steyne. This scene is one of the serial's satiric high-points. The dabs of rouge on Rawdon's face, counterfeiting maidenly innocence, emphasize his embarrassment, while his broad moustache, contrasting absurdly with his shepherdess smock, is a perfect symbol

of manhood displaced. Beside him on the stage Becky's baroque arcadian costume of Marie Antoinette wig and gown provides an equally eloquent image of her role-playing social aspirations. The serial is particularly good at such set-pieces. The villanelle in episode thirteen has the same theatrical styliness as the Vauxhall gardens entertainment in episode two, in which Becky's trilling soprano voice upstages Britannia. The contrast between the artful Becky and the artless Amelia (Rebecca Saire) is achieved with surprising naturalness. Both Amelia and her faithful Dobbin (Simon Dormandy) succeed in investing honesty with a believably vulnerable dignity.

Above all, what emerges from Terrance Dick's production is the contemporaneity of Thackeray's theme. Without any modish attempts at modernizing Thackeray's style, the director Michael Owen Morris succeeds in presenting not a cosy costume drama but a work which has lost none of its dangerous appeal. Though never descending into cynicism, Thackeray's ironic tale of social opportunism, with no false heroics or sentimental providence to redeem it, has a fascinating realism. Where Rawdon is finally undeceived about Becky's conduct his reaction is not one of high moral outrage but of angry disillusionment at being excluded from her schemes: "You might have spared me £100", he complains. Becky's own indestructibility, ending her days in comfortable retirement at Cheltenham and Bath, where "she busies herself with works of piety", is less an example of social satire than a tribute to natural selection with more affinities to Darwin than to Bunyan.

Sales of books and manuscripts

H. R. Woudhuysen

The chief feature of this autumn's book auctions has been the first two parts of the Estelle Doherty Collection which Christie's have been selling in London and New York. The October sale in America attracted a great deal of publicity because of the huge prices the early printed books reached; the incunabula were probably as fine a collection as will ever come on to the market again, with many copies printed on vellum and enriched with contemporary manuscript decorations. In London on October 2, medieval and renaissance manuscripts of the finest quality also made some spectacular prices with a total for the sale of slightly under £6 million for about forty-five lots. American bidding at this sale was strong, but English dealers managed to acquire some interesting things. The remaining four parts of the Doherty Collection will be sold in California (for the American items) in February 1988 and New York, finishing in May 1989 with books and manuscripts relating to William Morris and his circle. The richness of the material which Estelle Doherty collected before her death in 1958 is outstanding: the proceeds from the sales will go towards the training for the Roman Catholic priesthood in Southern California. Mere mortals who cannot afford to buy items from the collection might well content themselves with trying to get hold of all the catalogues of the sales: it is already almost impossible to lay hands on a copy of the first volume containing the early printed books - a complete set of the catalogues may well turn out to be a shrewd investment.

There was apparently no shortage of money at the two other sales of medieval manuscripts held in London this season. On the afternoon of the Doherty sale Christie's sold more manuscripts and early printed books, while Sotheby's auction of western manuscripts and miniatures the day before, December 1, despite lacking any really outstanding items, produced some striking results, and a total for the sale of nearly £250,000. Again some of the best lots went to American dealers and collectors. Kraus paid £34,000, against a pre-sale estimate of £7,000-£10,000, for a manuscript written in a humanist hand in north-east Italy during the second half of the fifteenth century, containing over 140 alchemical recipes and five pages with illustrations of scientific or alchemical appar-

atus. The very pretty Books of Hours from the Astor Collection in this sale did particularly well: Quaritch bought the most attractive of these, whose illumination was attributed to the workshop of the Bruges artist Simon Bening, for £58,000 (estimate £30,000-£50,000).

Sotheby's last sale of the season, on December 15, was devoted to English literature and history. Again, there was nothing here that was truly remarkable and over 15 per cent of the lots failed to find buyers, but there were still some items of general interest which attracted reasonable prices. The great successes of the sale were a group of twenty-two letters, written from the first convict fleet which sailed to New South Wales mainly during 1787 and 1788, which was bought by the Mitchell Library for just under £100,000, and a collection of sixty-five early Churchill letters, written between 1902 and 1904 when he was MP for Oldham, to the Chairman of the local Conservative Association, J. Travis-Clegg, which was bought by Fleming for its higher pre-sale estimate of £35,000. The forty-four lots sold on behalf of PEN for their Writers in Prison Fund made a very respectable if not sensational sum for such modern literary items (see NB page 1430). Elsewhere in the sale, large collections of first editions of both John Buchan and John Galsworthy did surprisingly well for such currently unfashionable writers. One hundred and twenty-six Buchan first editions, some of them limited and signed, went for £600 (estimate £300-£500), while a similar collection of nearly a hundred Galsworthy items - several of them presentation copies from the author and some not in the standard bibliography of his works - went to Fleming for £1,200 against a pre-sale estimate of £600-£700. In rather marked contrast, a good series of Robert Graves's letters to Sven and Juanita Berlin, written between 1936 and 1963, failed to find a buyer (estimate £4,000-£5,000), while a large collection of papers, photographs, posters and other material relating to the black entertainer Josephine Baker, collected by a prospective biographer, were bought by Hoffman and Freeman for 16,000. None of these prices include the buyer's premium.

H. Rider Haggard: A bibliography by D. E. Whatmore (187pp, Mansell, £35, 0 7201 1816 9) tackles the vexed problem of Haggard first editions and catalogue letters, speeches and even parodies of his style.

Conspicuously consuming

John Rosselli

CARLO GOLDONI
Countryman
Olivier Theatre

Five hours at Goldoni's "Country House" trilogy seem like five months reading Trollope in his *The Way We Live Now* mood. Narrative conventions aside, there is the same low-keyed naturalism, the same awareness of just what items figure in everyone's cash ledger, the same sense of human intercourse as the exercise of petty ill-will by all against all. In each, too, bouts of sententious moralizing interrupt but scarcely relieve the pop-pop of egos, billiard-ball-like, upon one another.

Each writer was the entomologist of a commercial bourgeoisie: though Goldoni's three plays are nominally set in and near Leghorn, they observe the pretensions of merchants, lawyers, and shopkeepers in his adopted Venice, where they were first put on - one at a time, but before a pretty unchanging audience - in 1761. The opening play, in which two families and their hangers-on bid each other up in the conspicuous consumption stakes - who shall first reach the longed-for holiday villa, who has the latest fashionable dress, who gets to ride in which carriage with which eligible young person - has long been an anthology piece. It is a masterpiece of theatrical engineering, almost Feydeau-like in the reversals it works up as departures for the country are ever more rapidly ordered and countermanded. The rest of the trilogy is less well known. The final play reaches a conclusion of exemplary bleakness: four loveless matches, all entered upon for money or out of hopelessness or fear of what people will say. Love withers in the light of what passes for reason but (as the anti-heroine describes it in a remarkable speech) is more like a cracked prototype computer. The awkward bit is the central play, set in three neighbouring villas: Goldoni runs out of suitable material and falls back on stereotypes of the day - the country bumpkin, the deluded old woman, the ubiquitous gossip and Neolander; the work for a time trends water.

The trilogy as a whole was recovered some years ago thanks to a famous production by Giorgio Strehler, of the Piccolo Teatro, in Milan, Italy at the fifth industrial power in the world is well fitted to appreciate it. Imagine,

not present-day tourist Venice, but a town such as Modena or Parma where prosperity runs through the social fabric like a name through a stick of rock. Being seen dressed in the latest fashion, going off on one's summer holidays at the appropriate time and to an approved and suitably expensive place - these things still matter. For all the changes in social manners and in the position of women (not to mention permanent Left-wing local government), "what would people say?" remains a question to be heeded. In such a setting the trilogy provides a vision of a loveless society on the way to an all-pervading jostling consumerism.

How much of this comes across on the South Bank? Mike Alfreds produces a full text; he cuts only one (detachable) scene and a few over-explanatory sentences here and there. He seems to have had in mind an Italianate tempestuousness: singers punctuate scene changes with demented babblings (Ilona Sekacz is the composer) of musical terms like *agitato* and *ostinato*, to show up what lies behind the cool grace of Paul Durr's roccoco permanent set and costumes; the anti-hero (Mark Ryland) swings between near-catatonia and hysterics; arms are waved, doors slammed. Unfortunately the company has little command of Italian gesture, a matter of earthy definiteness. (The exception is the bilingual actress Paola Dionisotti, who shows the real thing on the line "Ehi"). The weak father (James Smith) flaps loose arms and legs like Baron Hardup; the maid (Maggie Wells) enunciates with the care of a Cinderella, all nods and becks and ingratiating dimples. There is a line of descent from Goldoni to English pantomime by way of Rossini's *La Cenerentola*; but along it the hard Italian gaze yielded to northern fantasy and inconsequence - as here. Attempts at social realism seem equally confused: masters and mistresses shout at their servants, yet the maid sits while her mistress stands. Should it perhaps have been set in England, with the endless "Signora's" replaced by "Madam's" and every-one keen to get out of town before August 12?

It is a work that a national theatre ought to do, and when the entire company appears in the many-focused gambling scene one realizes that in London only the National could do it justice. Pleasures that stay in the mind are groupings consistently good to look at in their pale candied shades, and Sylvestra Le Touzel's still central figure, blanched of face, rational and wrong; over five hours, not quite enough.

Incense and idyll

J. Mordaunt Crook

Franz Xaver Winterhalter and the Courts of Europe, 1830-70
National Portrait Gallery, until January 10

Disraeli said it first: "With women you always flatter, and with monarchs you lay it on with a howl." Just as Winterhalter flattered the royalty of his age, so *Winterhalter and the Courts of Europe* flatters Winterhalter himself. Lavishly sponsored by United Technologies, elegantly staged by Barry Mazur, sumptuously catalogued by Richard Ormond and Carol Blackett-Ord, this is an exhibition which positively revels in flattery. In his own lifetime Winterhalter was dismissed by all the critics as a royal toady: a simple boy from the Black Forest whose precocious talents were suffocated by a surfeit of incense. Today incense seems to be back in fashion.

In a way Winterhalter was an artist with no style of his own, simply a synthetic technique of superlative fluency. His "Susannah and the Elders" (1860) echoes Rubens; his "Princess Woronzova" (c1859) and "Countess Krasinska and her Children" (1853) both recall Van Dyck. His "Duc de Nemours" (1843) borrows from Ingres, his "Comte Pozzo di Borgo" (1849) and "Comte de Nieuwerkerken" (1852) both derive from Titian; his "Lady Middleton" (1863) pays tribute first to Van Dyck and then to Lawrence; his "Decameron" (c1847) is almost a parody of Raphael. "The Empress Eugénie Surrounded by her Ladies in Waiting" (1855) was described at the time - by Gustave Planché - as "quite simply the parody of a Watteau". And of "Princess Troubetskoi" (1859), Ormond notes: "the landscape is *Pastische Fragonard*, as the dress is *pastiche Louis Seize*". Where then, amid so much derivative trackle, should we look for the essential Winterhalter?

Like the architects of his age, Winterhalter was above all an eclectic. From 1839 at the court of Louis-Philippe, from 1842 at the court of Queen Victoria, from 1853 at the court of Napoleon III, he set out to re-fashion regal images into new forms of iconic tradition. In his hands the classical symbolism of royalty becomes suffused with romantic realism. He begins as Neo-Renaissance and ends as Neo-Rococo. As a young man he preferred Horace Vernet and the French Academy to J. P. Overbeck and the German Nazarenes: in Rome they called him *der Französische*. In later years his range of reference widened: he managed to create symbols of bourgeois monarchy - as well as those "universal talismans of the Second Empire" - out of half remembered images of the *ancien régime*. The poses may be second-hand, but the handling - palette, lighting, characterization - is identifiably his own.

He was certainly industrious. Between 1839 and 1848 he painted an average of three to four formal portraits each year for Louis-Philippe. Between 1842 and 1871 he produced more than 100 works in oil for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert as well as quantities of informal sketches. At the same time he maintained a busy bachelor studio in Paris - with his brother Hermann as coadjutor and manager - turning out portraits of grandees from France, Germany, Belgium, Russia and Poland. The fall of the Orleanist monarchy in 1848 was only a temporary setback. Within five years he was re-established as hierophant to the court of Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie. And during the 1850s and 1860s his list of patrons reads like an index to the Almanach de Gotha. In Poland there were the Branickis, the Krasinskis, the Potockis, the Zamoyskis. In Russia - besides the Tzar and Tzarina - there was Princess Troubetskoi, Countess Lamsdorff, Madame Naryshkina and a whole troop of ladies of the court, Queen Isabella of Spain, King Pedro of Portugal, William I of Prussia, even the Maharajah Duleep Singh - Winterhalter's royal roll-call was second to none. "He specialises", noted Arthur Stevens in 1863, "in painting the queens and princesses of the whole world; every august head appears to require consecration by Winterhalter's brush."

Some of the effects are sensational: the frothy tulle enveloping Princess Anna of Hesse (1858) and Princess Metternich (1860); Madame Rimsky-Korsakov's tumbling tresses (1864); or the stars of silver foil which sparkle in the gown created by Worth for Elizabeth, Empress of Austria (1865). There is character too: Queen Victoria could always rely on the production of a "true Coburg nose". Had she chosen, as her faithful limner, not Winterhalter, but Sir Francis Grant, the Royal Collection might now contain a number of better pictures. But Grant, for all his talent, could never have created that idyll of domestic felicity, "The Royal Family" (1846). In selecting Winterhalter - licensed mythographer to the crowned heads of Europe - Queen Victoria (or was it Prince Albert?) displayed a political instinct which turned out to be unerring.

Franz Xaver Winterhalter and the Courts of Europe, 1830-70 (240pp, with 91 colour and 155 black-and-white illustrations, £35, paperback, £14.95, 0 904017 84 2) is published by the National Portrait Gallery.

1 I begin: the first memory.
This was of red and purple flowers on a black ground - my mother's dress; and she was sitting either in a train or in an omnibus, and I was on her lap. I therefore saw the flowers she was wearing very close; and can still see purple and red and blue, I think, against the black; they must have been anemones I suppose.

2 I have no remembrance of the time when I began to learn Greek. I have been told that it was when I was three years old. My earliest recollection on the subject is that of committing to memory what my father termed Vocables; being lists of common Greek words, with their signification in English which he wrote out for me on cards.

3 As proof of my readiness to accept autobiographical convention, let me at once record my two earliest memories. The first is being loyally held up at a window to watch a procession of decorated carriages and wagons for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. . . . The second is gazing upwards with a sort of despondent terror at a cupboard in the nursery, which stood accidentally open, filled to the ceiling with octavo volumes of Shakespeare.

4 I have a recollection, definite enough though vague in detail, of a dramatic performance of the story of Adam and Eve; organized for the benefit of hip-entrants and nurse-maid. I was Adam and a sister, my elder by less than a year, was Eve. My brother was the devil.

5 I have next to nothing to say about my childhood. In later years my mother, looking at me almost reproachfully, would sometimes say, "Ah! you were such a pretty boy!" whence I had no difficulty in concluding that I had not fulfilled my early promise in the matter of looks.

6 The oil-lamp in the nursery made a brown stain on the ceiling which no one could get off; and when my mother put her hands together, made rabbits on the wall, how was I to know they would not stay when she took her hands away? . . . And Annie the cook had a riddle which began "What is it that goes round and round the house?" And the answer was the wind, but, though I knew that was the answer in the riddle, I had a clammy suspicion that in fact it might be something else. Going round and round the house, evil, waiting to get me.

7 'What is it that goes round and round the house?' The riddle began. A wolf, we thought, or a ghost? Our cold backs turned to the chink in the kitchen shutter.

The range made our small scared faces warm as toast.

8 Many a time, in the course of doing these memoirs, I have wished that I were writing fiction. The temptation to invent has been very strong, particularly where recollection is hazy and I remember the substance of the event but not the details - the colour of a dress, the pattern of a carpet, the placing of a picture.

9 Sometimes it befell in these night wanderings, that a strong desire O'powered my better reason, and the bird 'Which was the captive of another's toils Became my prey; and when the deed was done I heard among the solitary hills Low breathings coming after me, and sounds Of undistinguishable motion, steps Almost as silent as the turf they trod, was the devil.

10 My mother opens the scullery door on Christmas Eve, 1954. To empty the dregs of the tea-pot on the snowy flags. A wind out of Siberia carries such voices as will carry through to the kitchen -

Someone mutters a flame from lichen and enters the red-and-white Fly Agaric while the others hunker in the dark, taking it in turn to drink his mind-expanding urine. One by one their reindeer nuzzle in.

Answers:
1 'The keen stars were twinkling. And the fair moon was rising among them, Dear June! The guitar was tinkling. But the notes were not sweet till you sung them Again. P. B. Shelley, "To June".

2 Then the Three Archangels Offered out of hand Anything in Heaven's gift That she might command. Azrael's eyes upon her, Raphael's wings above. Michael's sword against her heart. Jane said: "Love". Rudyard Kipling, "June's Marriage".

3 Cockscorn huir on the cold wind Hangs limp, turns the milk's weak mind . . . Jane, June. Tell us a crane. The morning light creaks down again Edith Sitwell, "Aubade".

4 I have a recollection, definite enough though vague in detail, of a dramatic performance of the story of Adam and Eve; organized for the benefit of hip-entrants and nurse-maid. I was Adam and a sister, my elder by less than a year, was Eve. My brother was the devil.

5 I have next to nothing to say about my childhood. In later years my mother, looking at me almost reproachfully, would sometimes say, "Ah! you were such a pretty boy!" whence I had no difficulty in concluding that I had not fulfilled my early promise in the matter of looks.

6 The oil-lamp in the nursery made a brown stain on the ceiling which no one could get off; and when my mother put her hands together, made rabbits on the wall, how was I to know they would not stay when she took her hands away? . . . And Annie the cook had a riddle which began "What is it that goes round and round the house?" And the answer was the wind, but, though I knew that was the answer in the riddle, I had a clammy suspicion that in fact it might be something else. Going round and round the house, evil, waiting to get me.

7 'What is it that goes round and round the house?' The riddle began. A wolf, we thought, or a ghost? Our cold backs turned to the chink in the kitchen shutter.

The range made our small scared faces warm as toast.

8 Many a time, in the course of doing these memoirs, I have wished that I were writing fiction. The temptation to invent has been very strong, particularly where recollection is hazy and I remember the substance of the event but not the details - the colour of a dress, the pattern of a carpet, the placing of a picture.

9 Sometimes it befell in these night wanderings, that a strong desire O'powered my better reason, and the bird 'Which was the captive of another's toils Became my prey; and when the deed was done I heard among the solitary hills Low breathings coming after me, and sounds Of undistinguishable motion, steps Almost as silent as the turf they trod, was the devil.

10 My mother opens the scullery door on Christmas Eve, 1954. To empty the dregs of the tea-pot on the snowy flags. A wind out of Siberia carries such voices as will carry through to the kitchen -

Someone mutters a flame from lichen and enters the red-and-white Fly Agaric while the others hunker in the dark, taking it in turn to drink his mind-expanding urine. One by one their reindeer nuzzle in.

Answers:
1 'The keen stars were twinkling. And the fair moon was rising among them, Dear June! The guitar was tinkling. But the notes were not sweet till you sung them Again. P. B. Shelley, "To June".

2 Then the Three Archangels Offered out of hand Anything in Heaven's gift That she might command. Azrael's eyes upon her, Raphael's wings above. Michael's sword against her heart. Jane said: "Love". Rudyard Kipling, "June's Marriage".

3 Cockscorn huir on the cold wind Hangs limp, turns the milk's weak mind . . . Jane, June. Tell us a crane. The morning light creaks down again Edith Sitwell, "Aubade".

4 I have a recollection, definite enough though vague in detail, of a dramatic performance of the story of Adam and Eve; organized for the benefit of hip-entrants and nurse-maid. I was Adam and a sister, my elder by less than a year, was Eve. My brother was the devil.

5 I have next to nothing to say about my childhood. In later years my mother, looking at me almost reproachfully, would sometimes say, "Ah! you were such a pretty boy!" whence I had no difficulty in concluding that I had not fulfilled my early promise in the matter of looks.

6 The oil-lamp in the nursery made a brown stain on the ceiling which no one could get off; and when my mother put her hands together, made rabbits on the wall, how was I to know they would not stay when she took her hands away? . . . And Annie the cook had a riddle which began "What is it that goes round and round the house?" And the answer was the wind, but, though I knew that was the answer in the riddle, I had a clammy suspicion that in fact it might be something else. Going round and round the house, evil, waiting to get me.

7 'What is it that goes round and round the house?' The riddle began. A wolf, we thought, or a ghost? Our cold backs turned to the chink in the kitchen shutter.

The range made our small scared faces warm as toast.

8 Many a time, in the course of doing these memoirs, I have wished that I were writing fiction. The temptation to invent has been very strong, particularly where recollection is hazy and I remember the substance of the event but not the details - the colour of a dress, the pattern of a carpet, the placing of a picture.

9 Sometimes it befell in these night wanderings, that a strong desire O'powered my better reason, and the bird 'Which was the captive of another's toils Became my prey; and when the deed was done I heard among the solitary hills Low breathings coming after me, and sounds Of undistinguishable motion, steps Almost as silent as the turf they trod, was the devil.

COMMENTARY



"The Forgotten Melody", 1902, by Ethel Walker; one of the items in the Barbican Gallery's 'The Edwardian Era' exhibition, reviewed on this page

other memorabilia and a number of posters both for and against the women's cause, including the wonderfully comic "A Suffragette's Home", issued by the National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage which depicts the husband's return after a hard day's work to a neglected family and a hard-hearted note, "Back in an hour or so". There are some good Trade Union banners too, and some interesting matter about workers' movements: the most beautiful of the banners in the exhibition is probably the British Association for the Advancement of Science's "Let Glasgow Flourish". One would have been glad to learn more about Edwardian Glasgow, its "municipal socialism", its Arts and Crafts movement, its famous tea rooms. Charles Rennie Mackintosh's designs for an "Art Lover's House" beautifully exemplify a certain sort of Edwardian high-mindedness.

Of paintings, there are works by John Singer Sargent, William Rothenstein, William Orpen (including his "Homage to Manet"), William Nicholson, Mary Sergeant Florence. In 1904 William Rothenstein began a series of drawings and paintings of Jews in Spitalfields. There is some interesting correspondence about the presentation of Rothenstein's "Jews Mourning

in a Synagogue" to the Tate by Jacob Moser, JP, in the name of the Jewish community and in commemoration of the Jewish exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1906. I should have liked to see more about the East End of London and the docks, particularly in view of the changes now taking place there. The survey of the countryside is too skimpy to give a clear idea of the problems left by the late Victorian agricultural depression, but there are reminders of the flourishing Edwardian theatre and music hall, an account of life in Norwich, a glance at plans for Letelworth Garden City.

The exhibition shows how vigorous and resolute was the movement for reform; also how optimistic. The Edwardian reformers, who came in the main from the middle classes, whether upper-middle-class or lower-middle-class (there being in those days a good deal more difference between the two than there is now), addressed themselves to anybody who would listen, in the belief that men and women of goodwill might be found in any sphere of life, and could be trusted to listen to, and in the end be persuaded by, a powerful argument. This optimism may now seem naive, but a touch of nostalgia for that aspect of the "good old days" may not be altogether out of place.

10 My mother opens the scullery door on Christmas Eve, 1954. To empty the dregs of the tea-pot on the snowy flags. A wind out of Siberia carries such voices as will carry through to the kitchen -

Someone mutters a flame from lichen and enters the red-and-white Fly Agaric while the others hunker in the dark, taking it in turn to drink his mind-expanding urine. One by one their reindeer nuzzle in.

Answers:
1 'The keen stars were twinkling. And the fair moon was rising among them, Dear June! The guitar was tinkling. But the notes were not sweet till you sung them Again. P. B. Shelley, "To June".

2 Then the Three Archangels Offered out of hand Anything in Heaven's gift That she might command. Azrael's eyes upon her, Raphael's wings above. Michael's sword against her heart. Jane said: "Love". Rudyard Kipling, "June's Marriage".

3 Cockscorn huir on the cold wind Hangs limp, turns the milk's weak mind . . . Jane, June. Tell us a crane. The morning light creaks down again Edith Sitwell, "Aubade".

4 I have a recollection, definite enough though vague in detail, of a dramatic performance of the story of Adam and Eve; organized for the benefit of hip-entrants and nurse-maid. I was Adam and a sister, my elder by less than a year, was Eve. My brother was the devil.

5 I have next to nothing to say about my childhood. In later years my mother, looking at me almost reproachfully, would sometimes say, "Ah! you were such a pretty boy!" whence I had no difficulty in concluding that I had not fulfilled my early promise in the matter of looks.

6 The oil-lamp in the nursery made a brown stain on the ceiling which no one could get off; and when my mother put her hands together, made rabbits on the wall, how was I to know they would not stay when she took her hands away? . . . And Annie the cook had a riddle which began "What is it that goes round and round the house?" And the answer was the wind, but, though I knew that was the answer in the riddle, I had a clammy suspicion that in fact it might be something else. Going round and round the house, evil, waiting to get me.

7 'What is it that goes round and round the house?' The riddle began. A wolf, we thought, or a ghost? Our cold backs turned to the chink in the kitchen shutter.

The range made our small scared faces warm as toast.

8 Many a time, in the course of doing these memoirs, I have wished that I were writing fiction. The temptation to invent has been very strong, particularly where recollection is hazy and I remember the substance of the event but not the details - the colour of a dress, the pattern of a carpet, the placing of a picture.

9 Sometimes it befell in these night wanderings, that a strong desire O'powered my better reason, and the bird 'Which was the captive of another's toils Became my prey; and when the deed was done I heard among the solitary hills Low breathings coming after me, and sounds Of undistinguishable motion, steps Almost as silent as the turf they trod, was the devil.

10 My mother opens the scullery door on Christmas Eve, 1954. To empty the dregs of the tea-pot on the snowy flags. A wind out of Siberia carries such voices as will carry through to the kitchen -

Someone mutters a flame from lichen and enters the red-and-white Fly Agaric while the others hunker in the dark, taking it in turn to drink his mind-expanding urine. One by one their reindeer nuzzle in.

Answers:
1 'The keen stars were twinkling. And the fair moon was rising among them, Dear June! The guitar was tinkling. But the notes were not sweet till you sung them Again. P. B. Shelley, "To June".

2 Then the Three Archangels Offered out of hand Anything in Heaven's gift That she might command. Azrael's eyes upon her, Raphael's wings above. Michael's sword against her heart. Jane said: "Love". Rudyard Kipling, "June's Marriage".

3 Cockscorn huir on the cold wind Hangs limp, turns the milk's weak mind . . . Jane, June. Tell us a crane. The morning light creaks down again Edith Sitwell, "Aubade".

4 I have a recollection, definite enough though vague in detail, of a dramatic performance of the story of Adam and Eve; organized for the benefit of hip-entrants and nurse-maid. I was Adam and a sister, my elder by less than a year, was Eve. My brother was the devil.

Synopticon

BY OLIVER REYNOLDS

for my father

the smell of ink
and fresh papyrus
He has finished
He unrolls the scroll
the length of his room
then walks alongside it
Seven paces
A life
lives
life and death
in seven sandalled paces
He has been writing for a week
and he has finished
He rubs his eyes
with small crushed hands
then sits under the window
looking at the scroll
a river of white
in the sunshine flooding
Alexandria
Antioch
or Rome

If Mark
was used by Matthew and Luke
for the events of Jesus' life
the source of the teachings
may have been a lost handbook
known by the symbol
Q
The German for source
is Quelle
and this symbol
is usually attributed
to Wellhausen
Lightfoot however
traces it back to Robinson
who said the first source
Mark
merely wrote down the words
of Peter
Thus the first source became
P
and the second or handbook
Q

Was he martyred
in Alexandria
only in legend
or was he martyred
for real
bound
dragged through the streets
to the precipice
known as Buccellus
Did they mock
his small clumsy hands
They mocked the broken hands
of Victor Jara
poet guitarist and singer
The tongue of fire
is torn out
No songs of Zion
And having broken his hands
they killed him

Q contains
wheat flies grass trees
foxes lambs vipers chickens
Q contains
weddings loaves fishes
threshing lamps millstones
Q contains
ovens money sandals
music gifts children
Q contains

Colobodactylus
This Latin adjective
meaning stumpy-fingered
and applied to Mark
in an early text
has a number of glosses
His small hands
were congenital
He was a Levite
and had disfigured himself
to avoid being made a priest
The word applied not to him
but to his gospel
either because of the style
which purists find
blunt and awkward
Colobodactylus

Numbers
5 loaves 2 fishes
12 baskets of fragments
5000 people
upon the green grass
in ranks of 50 and 100
Vividness
The word Mark used
for these flower-heds
Aramaic
The deaf and dumb man
kannointed with spittle
Ephphatha
He opened
And he hears
and speaks plain

Come to bed
No
Come to bed
No
Her hand is tight
on his robe
He slips out of it
and flees
His original coat
of many colours
is now a bare few
red face
black hair
and the tin bobbing
of buttocks
Holding his robe
she falls back
Ah she sighs
Ah

Is that man with a cello
Hitchcock
Only a glimpse
and already the plot's
hurried on
The man met by the disciples
bearing a pitcher of water
is it Mark
When Jesus is arrested
he's followed by a yonge man
in Tyndale's version
clothed in linnen
upon the bare
is it Mark
or as he's grabbed
and flies naked
is it just an echo
from Genesis
Torches and shouts fade
Slow dawn
That large petal
on the ground
turns out to be an ear

Shrinking violet

Mick Imlah

JEREMY REED
Selected Poems
240pp. Penguin. Paperback, £4.95.
0140073558

No poet in England polarizes opinion more violently than Jeremy Reed. Wherever new poetry is discussed you will hear his person maligned, his work parodied and (in particular) his performances ridiculed; and what really irks his detractors is that their antagonism is an essential part of the Reed *persona*. He cultivates persecution, and hydra-like makes new poems out of the way he feels when people abuse his old ones. The only way to stop the process would be to ignore him.

But he can no longer be ignored. The appearance of his *Selected Poems* in the prestigious King Penguin series, where he joins the likes of Geoffrey Hill and Tony Harrison, reminds us that for his uniquely devoted following, and for a number of more objective critics besides, Reed is, or is almost, or is potentially, a major poet. For Kathleen Raine, his steadfast apologist, he is "without question the most imaginatively gifted poet since Dylan Thomas"; he is also apparently the vainest, and perhaps for this reason daringly negligent of his craft. The power of his imaginative faculty alone will compel the reader through these two hundred and forty pages, and it is not a versatile talent. You will love it or loathe it.

The selection is over-generous (both of his mature collections are given complete), but it's hard to see how it could be otherwise, since the most remarkable feature of the book as a whole is the sameness of its parts. There are a hundred and thirty poems in all, most of them stylistically indistinguishable, and many of them written to the same formula. Typically, the poet, a being of special sensitivity, describes a perilous foray into the shocks of nature, "feeling forward with bristling antennae": "I came on out / and crossed a field . . ."; "I go outside and cross a field . . ."; "I cross a field and then another field . . ." and so on. Now he takes up position to view or listen to his

chosen aspect of nature: "I stood stock-still . . ."; "I stand and smart . . ."; "I stand . . . and watch . . . I watch . . ."; "I stand . . . and watch him . . ."; "I watch those birds . . . I watch a man . . . I watch a man dive . . ."; "I watch a shoal break . . ."; "I watch the ritual . . ."; "I watch from the hill's summit . . ."; "I listen at the wood's edge . . ."; "I listen on the outskirts of a wood . . ."; "I shiver in the dark . . ." etc. Now, the climax of the poem, an assault by the subject (an ant, a mullet, a geranium) on the nerve-endings ("I would find myself flinching from blue sky"), and an exhausted walk back to a barn or the car ("I rise . . ."; "I walk back to your parking-spot . . ."; "I go inside . . ."; "I go back inside . . .").

Like the structure, verbal effects and syntactical gimmicks are often recycled from poem to poem. One ubiquitous device harnesses the colloquial apostrophe "s" to an outlandish metaphor, as in "The light's a goldsmith tooling in this place . . ." or "My heart's a black swan climbing to the sun . . .". The natural observation itself is distorted by the monotonous over-tuning of Reed's antennae; the atmosphere is always electric. For instance, among the opening poems of *Nero* (1986), the first has "touchpaper-rabbits" (compare the "touchpaper-crisp" flight of a wasp that comes later); the third has "short-fused rabbits" (compare "the red fuse-end of a stoat's temper" in the sixth, or the tenacity of ants, "a thin / red fuse that flickers" in the fourteenth); in number six, the poet hears "a rabbit shriek", and in the seventh (while "a farm-dog / chased a rabbit") it is the "short-tailed vole" which is "screeching" and a crow "shouting". In another poem, both rabbits and vixens scream (the vixen with a "yapping peacock scream"). Reed is a connoisseur of colour; but, as these animal sketches suggest, his palette is more often at the service of lurid fallacy than of objective representation, and what we see, in the end, is him.

Disconcertingly, Reed's self-portrait is done in the very tints his detractors might reach for to caricature his type of sensibility: "precious", "shrill", "nervous", "delirious at small things". This is how he sees himself in the vicinity of "a small town": "I skirt its edges / tail-up, an alighting magpie / seeking the shelter of hedges, / nervously gone at a shadow . . .". Or in another pose:

Almost I hesitate
to reach the green moss bedded round the roots
to aging elms, and bend down to enquire
with tentative fingers of the mauve flower
shrinking beneath the arrow of its leaf,
a fragile concentration only shared
by those who seek it out . . .

In this bizarre manoeuvre, Reed really is comparing himself to a shrinking violet, and in the last two lines he sets up an elitism of fragility that presupposes the boorish hostility of others. His critics can only vindicate him by disapproval. This is "An Age Bereft".

Clair Wills

EILÉAN NÍ CHUILLÉANÁIN
The Second Voyage
68pp. Newcastle upon Tyne; Bloodaxe.
Paperback, £4.95.
1852240164

Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin's poetry has been well received in her native Ireland, and *The Second Voyage*, comprising poems from her three volumes published there (it has been edited by Peter Fallon and is published in Dublin by Fallon's Gallery Books), is a welcome selection of her work for English readers. It displays a striking consistency of theme and technique—the dominant motif throughout being the contrast between movement and stasis. For Ní Chuilleanáin everything shifts, alters and progresses (if only you will let it. So "The Lady's Tower" depicts a still-life in a fury of activity: walls slice downwards, "cellars plumb / Behind the shifting the oblique veins of the hill"). This mobile topography of the book's opening poem is answered in the last, where "A Gentleman's Bedroom" is built from the perspective of the possessing eye which frames; exploits and kills. While the thatch of the lady's tower

They won't recall our panache, our finesse,
we're outsiders in an age without Proust,
James or Cocteau to notate how style is
a something-not-pronounced, minutiae
of speech, the angle of a handkerchief,
a buttonhole or orchid in a vase,
a mauve ink inscription on a flyleaf;
but more a sensitivity which holds
each mind invulnerable in its privacy,
unencroached on in areas which flinch
a lifetime with the fear of exposure.

An age disqualified in this way from sharing the poet's reading of the world must be content to concern itself with the quality of his writing. His principal measure is a ten-syllable line which neither follows nor compensatingly avoids an iambic stress-pattern; but neither the single line nor the units in which he groups them (usually scruffy quatrains) are conceived of as units of sense. "Rilke thought that ten / good lines in a lifetime are all we get" he reminds us, but this hardly excuses "liverish hatching, his bore hole's his head", "socks visible beneath trousers gone high", "of the red-eyed wolf daimon's glowering prowls" or, for that matter, "unencroached on in areas which flinch". If he has little sense of lines, he has even less of the space between them; the enjamment in "Nero" is random:

The mob would have flayed
him alive, trussed and pitched him in a sack
into the Tiber. Now Galba's arrayed
in purple, men wish the old tyrant back.

Perhaps effects of stress have been sacrificed here for the pleasures of rhyme; but what have the pleasures of rhyme been sacrificed for in this quatrain from a rhymed poem?

note to parochial affairs.
What's a village but a Chekhov
story, or a roulette table?
All the faces must turn up

In short, whatever the exquisite refinement of his internal apparatus, Reed falls short as a poet because his handling of the medium is so careless and coarse.

Unsympathetic readers will also want to dredge up the matter of Reed's punctuation: he uses only the full-stop and a serve-all comma, and misuse of both leads him into many pointless solecisms. The fact that no editor has seen fit (or been allowed) to correct these implies a misguided extension of the idea of the poet's infallible instinct. In one poem, the figure of John Clare is reluctant to "suffer quibbling editors who blame / [him] for [his] wrong spelling"; Jeremy Reed, though, might prefer to know better, if only for the clear benefit of making his own best sense. But none of this needs repeating to Reed's detractors, and it will be dismissed by the poet and his entrenched coterie as "quibbling". For each group, one of two ringing mottoes will remain exclusively true: either "My pen-nib activates the universe"; or, "One's lines resound against an empty sky".

Nearer by keeping still

"converses with spread sky", the gentleman attempts not dialogue with but ownership of his surroundings. Inevitably the gables and stacks around him are "All graveyard shapes / Viewed from his high windowpane."

This male need to fix, measure and control objects is represented as a fear of flux. The book is peopled by travelling men who anxiously resist the shifting landscape. Witness "Odysseus' frustration with 'the insults of the sea'", which remains oblivious to his efforts to make an impression:

If there was a single
Streak of decency in these waves now, they'd be
Pocked and denied with the hattering they've had.
And we could name them as Adam named the
beasts.

Odysseus decides his second voyage will be on land, where he can plant his car, as a "Tide-mark" and measure of his progress. But for Ní Chuilleanáin, "Going anywhere fast is a trap": staying still is journeying. Only by arrested movement can we avoid killing off the "under-side" of things, celebrated in "Barrack Street":

Missing from the scene

Open secrets

Simon Rae

P. J. KAVANAGH
Presences: New and selected poems
111pp. Chatto and Windus. Paperback, £4.95.
0701131969

Though in many ways an obvious successor to Edward Thomas, who has certainly been one of the presences haunting his poetry over the years, P. J. Kavanagh has also much in common with Louis MacNeice, an essentially private and autobiographical poet, for all the political and social backdrop of the 1930s in his work. Kavanagh displays the same talent for a conversational tone, and shares MacNeice's fondness for rhyme, his love of echoes: like MacNeice he employs traditional forms while allowing himself a relaxed freedom regarding line-length and metre (not to be mistaken for a lack of craft).

The parallels should not be over-stressed, however; Kavanagh is decidedly his own man with his own interests and concerns. For one thing, religion takes the place of politics for him, though his attitude to belief reveals something of that critical fastidiousness MacNeice maintained towards the political orthodoxies of his day. In "Edward Thomas in Heaven", Kavanagh writes: "It would be mere loss / To be welcomed by an assured Edward Thomas. / There must be doubt in heaven . . . / How shall we recognise the ones we love / If next we see them fitting round God's finger like a glove?"

Many of these poems arise from time spent "down eight muddy steps, and miles from nowhere" in rural Gloucestershire. The "open secret" of nature is sometimes hard and demanding. "I cannot bite the day to the core", wrote Edward Thomas, and that sense of the elusiveness of the surrounding reality is a recurring theme for Kavanagh. But his work is not under-populated. Poems about people, close family in the main, abound. There are some excellent pieces about his children poised at the various stages of growing up, and the extended "One", addressed to his father, a man who preferred the forced gregariousness of Margate to the solitude of the countryside, and "barely believed in the private life" at all. Kavanagh clearly believes passionately in the private life, and it lies at the root of all his poetry.

It remains his theme in the new poems that round off the book, though the prospect is bleak as he surveys "the same long epic to an icy fastness", with ageing (the middle-aged are "cadet / wrinkles, fledgling gnarled persons"), bereavement and death the only future. In "Late Acknowledgement", a fine memorial to a neighbour more important to him than he had realised, Kavanagh writes: "Some deaths leave a gap that heals over / But others leave presences." That, at their best, is the sort of resonance Kavanagh's own poems achieve.

The many flat surfaces,
Undersides of doors, of doormats
Blank backs of wardrobes.

It is precisely this underside which the gentleman's perspective cannot encompass, just as the spiders, mice and beetles go unnoticed by those who, with a direction in mind, think they have understood the secrets of movement.

The book is studded with the dead, with tombs and graveyards which in turn reveal themselves as mazes where the names of the dead are recycled to the accompaniment of "the long rambles of the spider". The impossibility of endings is evidenced by the fluid circularity of the poems themselves, the best of which avoid epigrammatic conclusions. In "Early Recollections", Ní Chuilleanáin explains, "if I can never write 'goodbye' / On the torn final sheet" (it is because completed statements are brought about not by closure but by continual growth). The book thrives on the creepings, rustlings, and imperceptible burgeonings of life which are the opposite of sureness and solidity. Solid itself, this book exists as an ironic rebuttal of the travelling man's spurious notions of progress and achievement.

Open secrets

The textual apparatus

Peter Brooks

GÉRARD GENETTE
Seuil
389pp. Paris: Seuil, 150fr.
202 0095254

One can imagine the pleasure Gérard Genette took in inscribing the title *Seuils* on a volume to be published by the Éditions du Seuil – comparable to the moment when, having produced two volumes of essays entitled *Figures* and *Figures II*, he discovered the third could be called *Figures III* with a nice submerged pun on "figure-toi". Genette, for all his seriousness as a critic, is a humorous man, given to a kind of deadpan comic routine while treating the most apparently deadly stuff – taxonomies of literary modes and genres – with exhaustive thoroughness.

The "thresholds" he studies here are those between a literary work in the strict sense and its claims to the reader's benevolent attention: titles, prefaces, notes, blurbs, dedications and the like. Genette began his critical career by giving us, among other things, some fine essays on Baroque poetry, and one detects in his recent work a continuing attraction to the baroque: a love of ornamentation – but ornamentation seen as functional – and a desire to recover for literary study what is often dismissed as mere decoration and stylistic calceola. He stands as our major post-modernist poetician, not because he is particularly interested in the literature labelled post-modernist, but because he wants to write the poetics of allusion, overtone, intertextual counterpoint, of the historical context of ornamental reference, and he proceeds in a manner that is at once playful, even jokey, and deadly serious.

Seuils concerns the "paratext", defined as "that by which a text becomes book and offers itself as such to its readers, and more generally, to the public" – a kind of grey zone between the inside and outside of the book where a transaction between text and readership takes place. Now, as one expects from Genette, the distinctions start to ramify: paratext is divided into peritext (what immediately surrounds the text: author's name, title, preface, chapter titles, notes, blurbs) and epitext (related material such as interviews, letters, journal entries, material that may eventually – in the guise of a classic, for instance – come between the covers of the book). Further distinctions: paratextual material can be anterior (like the Homeric titles originally given by Joyce to the chapters of *Ulysses*, then suppressed on publication), original, ulterior, belated, in turn posthumous or "anthomous". Prefaces, to take one important example of paratext, can be authorial, allographical (written by another), or actorial (written by the subject of a critical study, for instance, or, putatively, by a character in a novel), and all three of these types can be variously authentic, fictive or apocryphal – resulting in a diagram duly supplied by Genette of nine types of preface classified according to the status of the preface.

Genette's mind revels in these high-structuralist categorizations and distinctions, finding ultimate satisfaction in the schematic table which lays out all the real and virtual possibilities of a certain discursive practice. If his hair-splitting gives the impression of an extreme scholasticism, his ironic self-awareness ever introduces the necessary print of humour, transforming it from a medieval to a post-modern scholasticism. He in fact makes us understand that grammar and rhetoric should matter now as much as they did in the medieval trivium, since they stand at the gates to an understanding of how literature works on us. He is always willing to allow that his distinctions and tables are disposable, valuable less in themselves than as perceptual aids to the functions of the discursive practices under consideration. His analysis of paratextual material achieves something of an effect of estrangement, making as it were of the old material we have come to accept as the normal accompaniment of the text offered us in the form of books.

What is most important in *Seuils* is, indeed, the study of how the book attempts to mediate between a text and the reading of it, which, under our current arrangements, must include its marketing and reviewing, and eventually (if it survives) its non-critical commentary by the

author himself (in interviews, for instance), and reissue (with various appendices, pre-texts, variants and editorial commentary). Genette's poetics here joins a recent trend in criticism towards the study of literary pragmatics – how messages are received – and towards a renewed attention to literature as a part of the "republic of letters": the study of literature as an institution.

Genette cites a comment of Roland Barthes (responding to an interviewer's question about his attitude towards interviews), that he had always wanted to devote a course to an important subject that had never been properly studied: "a grand and thorough tableau of the practices of intellectual life today". *Seuils* offers elements of this picture, demonstrating the functional role of paratextual material as a mediator between text and public. The paratext attempts to guide and manipulate the text's worldly career. Since the text is itself immutable, it cannot adjust itself to changes, in time and in space, of its potential public, and the paratext assumes the role of adaptor largely by way of the author's efforts during his lifetime, then posthumously through editors.

To say this is no doubt to give greater weight to the author's own reading of his work, and thus to his intentions, than contemporary criticism has tended to allow. Does the study of paratextuality necessarily lead to what William S. Burroughs once called the "intentional fallacy"? Genette's answer is the elusive but probably accurate one, that it is not necessary to know an author's intentions but that if one does know them they cannot help but change one's reading. He comes back here to his two favourite examples: the "hypertextual" status of *Ulysses*, where a reading without reference to the Homeric chapter titles, suppressed upon publication of the work, but freely publicized by Joyce (in manuscript, and in conversation with such interpreters as Valéry Larbaud and Stuart Gilbert) is virtually inconceivable to us, producible only in test-tube conditions; and the yet more baffling case of Stendhal's *Armance*. That novel suppressed the key Stendhal originally intended to furnish, which would have referred the reader to a popular novel of the time about an impotent lover. Stendhal meanwhile gave the key to his friend Mérimée in a famous letter which no modern edition of the novel fails to include. I imagine that a reading of *Armance* without the key is possible, but I have never found the experimental conditions for deciding the question.

The general point to be made is that we may in modern criticism have been too much obsessed, for very good historical reasons (the need to free reading from traditional ideologies, including those of the scholarly tradition), with the purity of the text, to the neglect of all the mediations involved when it enters the literary institution. Valéry's high-modernist dictum, "There is no true meaning of a text", was a salutary warning against intentionalism and the search for an authoritative interpretation. But de-authorizing interpretation may not be only a matter of isolating the text in a pristine medium. It can involve also study of all the chances and circumstances that have produced certain readings: a study of the lack of necessity in the ways books have been read and received. Such study would involve histories of a work's reception, the process of canon-formation, the interaction of high and low cultural products and media, as well as the paratextual practices analysed by Genette.

One might fault *Seuils* for being somewhat too timid a movement from textology to the study of the literary institution. Despite his often brilliant forays into the history of such paratextual elements as the title, the preface, and the blurb (the *préface d'introduction*, in France typically composed by the author, whereas Anglo-Saxon practice has turned it over to someone in the publishing house), Genette draws back from large generalizations about the historical evolution of the republic of letters: that his reflections suggest. He remains faithful to his project of a poetics, which ultimately implies concern with literature as system, and with a synchronic tableau. Anything else would have been contrary to the logic of all his books. Yet one senses that there is in Genette something else struggling to emerge: a student of the history of literature as a social institution. The book that he might write on that would be well worth having.

Guiding lights

Robin Buss

PHILIPPE JACOTTE
Une Transaction secrète
343pp. Paris: Gallimard, 145 fr.
207 0708659

This is a collection of reviews and other writings, written over a period of more than thirty years, by the Swiss poet and translator Philippe Jaccottet. While several praise writers whom he has admired (and sometimes translated), they amount to more than just an acknowledgement of influences and a poet's notes on his trade. The arrangement of the texts ignores the dates of their first appearance, so that the book begins with essays on ten pre-twentieth-century French and foreign poets and ends with a section entitled "Éléments de poésie". The whole amounts to a very definite statement about the nature of poetry and the poet's role.

Shakespeare and Hopkins feature in the first section, though Jaccottet acknowledges, without apology, his "incompetence en matière shakespearienne". He is more at home with Hölderlin, Novalis and Rilke, and he has interesting views on Góngora and Ungaretti. In his accounts of these foreign poets, mainly taken from reviews for the *NRF* or the *Gazette de Lausanne*, he considers the problems of translation, both as a translator himself and as a critic noting what was removed or added in the process. But beyond that he is working, almost surreptitiously, on his own project, most clearly here as he reflects on *haiku*, poetry that is devoid of narrative, neither exclamation nor oracle, empty of images, to arrive at the question of what is left after so much has been set aside.

Without naming anyone in particular, Jaccottet offers *haiku* as a corrective to the slackness and pretension of modern poetry. When he does name names, they are those of poets

he admires, though his praise is sometimes barbed. He is at his best on contemporary writers, his personal reminiscences and appreciations adding to what we know of them and in some cases introducing us to figures, especially Swiss, whose work may be less well known abroad.

Jaccottet is a poet of the natural world and, ideologically at least, a Romantic. As these texts advance from past to present and from abroad to home, so they uncover, bit by bit, his answers to the problems that bother him, which are to do with the utility of his craft. On a personal note, he gives a slightly dubious account of why he decided to earn his living from translation, rather than from teaching or publishing: it was a question of which would allow him the greatest freedom as a poet, but one suspects that the decision was not made with quite the deliberation that he pretends. As for justifying what he does, in an often senseless and violent world, he more or less borrows the answers that Alfred de Vigny gave in *Chatterton*. Closely following Vigny's classification of writers, he establishes a hierarchy that leads from the successful author, to the writer who serves a cause, and, finally, to the poet, "celui qui peut avoir l'air de poursuivre un rêve égoïste, désuet ou même aberrant".

Chatterton, in Vigny's play, compares the poet to a navigator, guiding the ship of state (a Romantic compromise with the argument on utility that seems very much like trying to have it both ways). Jaccottet, accepting the Prix Ramuz, responds with the figure of the poet as *veilleur*, guiding mankind through the darkness; and, elsewhere, as television weatherman, noting the signs of the invisible powers of wind, cold and moisture. Accepting the Prix Rambert, he defends the poet's inutility, and his ambition to leave behind nothing more than a few images. This, he implies, may not be the sort of thing that appeals these days to "les spécialistes de la littérature"; but Jaccottet knows where he stands.

Trapped in history

Patrick McCarthy

IAN NOBLE
Language and Narration in Céline's Writing:
The Challenge of Disorder
227pp. Macmillan, £27.50.
0333 333942
NICHOLAS HEWITT
The Golden Age of Louis-Ferdinand Céline
241pp. Leamington Spa: Berg, £22.
085 4965246

At first sight *Language and Narration in Céline's Writing* appears all too orthodox a book. Ian Noble begins with a discussion of the ideas of Barthes and Derrida, so his readers are not surprised to discover subsequently that *Voyage au bout de la nuit* is a "self-referential" work that contains a "conflict of discourses", or that its various texts "refer outwards to an infinity of texts". Céline, who evaded Liberation justice at the end of the war, has been less successful in escaping from contemporary academic criticism.

However, Noble's chapter on the first part of *Féerie pour une autre fois* may be the best piece of criticism yet written on that difficult and still underestimated book. This is not, of course, surprising because, if ever there was a novel that marks the victory of the signifier over the signified, it is *Féerie*. Noble demonstrates how Céline begins with a mock-story, about one Clémentine Arlon, before slipping into a discourse that self-consciously flaunts its bid to be "pure" and "total". Noble also has an important and heretical conclusion, where he argues that Céline's quest for pure discourse is not merely – as Barthes might have it – a liberation, but that it is an act of violence. The narrator of *Féerie* is jealous – jealousy is a key trait of Céline's writing – and determined to extinguish all other voices; Noble speaks of his "totalitarian" occupation of the text. This is a more disturbing view than Barthes's happy notion of a "polyphonic" writing and it reminds us that Céline lived in a more violent and chaotic period of history than Barthes did.

Nicholas Hewitt makes an important con-

tribution precisely by rooting this teller of fairy-tales in the historical reality of the first forty years of our century. *The Golden Age of Louis-Ferdinand Céline* analyses Céline's medical writings in order to show how they were part of the 1920s debate in France about Taylorism; he explains the role of the 1900 Exhibition in *Mort à crédit*, and concludes that it was, in reality as well as in the novel, a device to both dazzle and mock the *petite bourgeoisie*; he delves into lace-making and shows how the craft was declining in Paris, so that the narrator's parents in this same novel were indeed trapped by historical change.

Hewitt's thesis, which is certainly correct, is that Céline abhorred the post-1918 world, which was dominated by the growth of monopoly capitalism as well as by its aberration, Stalinist communism. Such capitalism struck a death-blow at the *petite bourgeoisie* whose golden age lay, supposedly, in the years before 1914. The trouble was that Céline did not believe in that golden age, whose reality he had demolished in *Mort à crédit*, so he arrived at what Hewitt calls a "historical stasis". One way out of this was the antisemitism of the pamphlets, where the Jew is the personification of a hateful modernity, while another was offered by Céline's London novel, *Guignol's Band*. Hewitt compares Céline's treatment of England and in particular of the London docks to those of previous French travellers, who had depicted them as the symbol of England's industrial might; Céline, on the other hand, turns them into "a fairy-tale treasure house".

The way thus seems open for him to discard history altogether and to launch into *Féerie*. But here one returns to the problem of Ian Noble's conclusion, for the second part of that book demonstrates that discourse cannot be total and that, when it confronts this sad fact, fresh violence erupts. There are no scapegoats in *Féerie* but there is no real escape from history either. Like history, the aesthetic realm of the fairy-tale is marked by a quest for monopolistic power that inevitably turns into self-destruction. In this sense *Féerie* does not stand outside history at all but is rather one of the greatest – perhaps the greatest – novel written about the Second World War.

The ways of the Master

Owen Chadwick

PETER HINCHLIFF
Benjamin Jowett and the Christian Religion
243pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press, £25.
019 26688 X

Benjamin Jowett was a clergyman who was rather dilapidated as a clergyman, a professor of Greek who was not a very good Greek scholar, and a preacher of sermons which provoked delicious caricatures of him preaching. His reputation rested on what he did for Balliol College (he left the damning inheritance of a Master having to write to all the old members to ask them for money), on his going on for a long time, on the need of schoolboys wanting translations of Plato to use his versions, and because he presided over one of the first modernized colleges in Oxford. In some respects this last achievement, which was considerable, happened more with his assent than with his active planning. He disapproved of research, and was contemptuous of people who knew a great deal. But the assent was hardly passive because no one could get anything through a meeting if Jowett was against it. ("Parnell", said a member of the governing body of the university, "is not in it with him for obstruction.") If he did not like what was proposed he left the chair and so brought the meeting to a sudden end. Some of his best work lay in the propagation of the doctrine that it is the duty of universities to produce people who will serve the State, though he does not seem to have seen that this was dangerous doctrine without explanations. He encouraged higher education and secondary education elsewhere in the country. He was not so good on ladies' colleges, which he wanted to be distinguished in society and good manners, and to be schools of music. Because history cannot transmit either his warmth of personal religion or his genius for some kinds of friendship, his reputation hardly survived into modern Victorian studies, which saw a reserved, dry, spinster of a don.

Nothing will ever make Jowett quite attractive. He thought it monstrous that the Fellows refused to elect him Master of Balliol in 1854, though posterity thinks that in the then circumstances the Fellows would have been mad to do so. He not only thought it an injustice, he sulked, and withdrew from high table, common-room and chapel, and altogether behaved in such a petulant way that it was surprising that they elected him next time round, sixteen years later. He behaved in the same petulant way, with more excuse, when the committee chosen to produce the Revised Version of the Bible failed to include him, though he was a Professor of Greek and a clergyman, and well-known as a translator.

The best of him was the personal affection for some of the young. He was very hospitable to the undergraduates. When everyone expected that the new Master would make a revolution in the academic practices of the college, his first care was to reform the cookery and the team of laundresses. He had the theory that everybody is a good sort of fellow when you know him, but it was the clever people who drew him. He was a man with disciples, often intelligent ones. He attracted able men, until they were his equals and colleagues. The silences of the walks he took with them were not felt to be hostile or remote. (At least, not always, for there is recorded the famous remark to a junior on one such walk, "If you have nothing more sensible to observe, you had better be silent altogether.") And part of this capacity for friendship with able people, women as well as men, was the ability to write letters. These were mainly written to women, who always drew him out better than men: they are not exactly good letters, for they are full of moral platitudes and vague encouragement, and yet they much interested his correspondents as they do the reader of Victorian to this day; at times they are valuable as a historical source. He would put down strong but not over-dogmatic opinions on the main subjects of the day, with an unusual twist in the point of view, illustrated or lightened with pointed epigrams. Jowett was then, and still is, respected for his public and formal performances, but for a personal and intimate quality of humane, at times wobbly, dialectic.

Peter Hinchliff, a historian who has been a

Tutor of Balliol for some years, undertakes in *Benjamin Jowett and the Christian Religion* a redrawing of this portrait, not of the man, but of the mind. The book is no whitewash. It is a picture of a person who had some good ideas but always preferred them to be vague, of a thinker who never wanted to think things through to their depths, and who was never willing to face up to the intellectual difficulties raised by his own good suggestions. He had no interest in a system of ideas. "I put down my thoughts like sparks", Jowett said, "and let them run into one another." But what is original about this book, and will astonish some readers, is its persuasive thesis that these half-formed ideas were seminal for the best of English religious thought in the first half of the twentieth century. This thesis turns someone often regarded as one of the boring Victorians into a figure of stature. The book starts slowly and then builds up into a study which will grip anyone interested in intellectual history.

Hinchliff takes seriously – he is the first to do so – those sermons which were so caricatured. He proves what no one before him has ever thoroughly proposed since Jowett's early admirers, that this was a man who thought seriously, and went on thinking seriously, about the Christian religion in an age of intellectual revolution for that religion.

The basic positions were simple. Modern science forced a restatement of Christianity, whose truth could no longer be made to rest on the evidence of miracle. Every established scientific proof must be accepted without hesitation. (How we know when a scientific theory is proved he never said, but he never thought Darwin's theory of evolution to be proved.) He wanted his chapel to have attractive traditional, but modernized, liturgies without the use of creeds ("for these almost at once pass into mere words"). The inspiration of religion was God in Christ. The way of religion was the moral imperative. He would say that there are problems in theology which cannot be solved, but no one should have a doubt how the Christian life should be lived. He was an individualist; that is, he thought much of the relation between a single person and his God, but did not think the Church to have much to do with it. You had to be a member of the Church if you were to influence its ideas or its practice. You have a duty, which is a moral duty, to keep up the practice of going to church. But you do not need the Church to tell you about God. The individual, using the Church and the Scripture and whatever other thought he knows (for example Plato, or "the best poets" – the best poets did not include either Euripides or Shelley), must form the highest idea of God that he can and then implant it in his mind and life. "I think I believe more and more in Christianity, not in miracles or hell, or verbal inspiration, or atonement, but in living for others and in going about doing good." "We must give up doctrine and teach by the lives of men, beginning with the life of Christ, instead. And the best words of men, beginning with the Gospels and the prophets, will be our Bible."

Jowett was impervious to the criticism that the liberal Protestant sees a mirror of his own face when he looks into the New Testament. He thought that this was the highest way for humanity. Modern discoveries in science and history made old dogmas look obsolete, but they had the advantage of allowing us to return to the simplicities that mattered: for him it was easiest to consider the Christian life under the theme of friendship, which he so much valued: friendship of God to humanity. He found the word love too embarrassing and the word charity too cold. The history of the New Testament was not important: it showed with a sufficient reliability a person who mattered and that was enough. He had no room for the mystical, or in theory for the sacraments, though he was careful to administer the sacrament in Balliol Chapel every Sunday.

None of this can easily be regarded as formative for the thinking of the earlier twentieth century. The leaders of English religious thought after Jowett's death, Charles Gore and William Temple, reacted against nearly every position which he maintained. Yet the fascination of Hinchliff's book rests upon the plea that Temple and Gore could not have written as they did without Jowett among their predecessors.



Sir Henry Acland, Jowett and the President of Trinity (H. G. Woods), caught in a snapshot by H. W. Tamm (1892); reproduced from Geoffrey Fisher's *Jowett: A portrait with background* (1957).

The argument runs thus. Jowett set T. H. Green upon the road of idealistic philosophy. Green was Jowett's pupil and always felt that he owed him a lasting debt. He owed to him the introduction to both Kant and Hegel, and (of equal importance) his knowledge of the Tübingen school and their revolutionary critique of the New Testament documents. Jowett thoroughly disapproved of what Green did with Hegel and Kant, but valued him deeply as friend and colleague until his premature death.

Everyone is agreed that Gore and Temple both owed their philosophical background to Green or to his school, that the idealist philosophy which reigned at Oxford from 1870 till the conversion of C. S. Lewis or even until the Second World War, was in most ways more friendly to the Christian faith than either its predecessors in Mill and Spencer or its successors in the positivists. Hinchliff contends that it was Gore, far more of a churchman than Jowett, and far more of a scholar in Christian learning, who was first able to make the Churches accept and enjoy much of what Jowett advocated. Temple arrived at Balliol only when Jowett's successor, Caird, was the Master. He always felt his debt to the idealist

philosophy of Caird. Jowett and Caird were very unlike, mentally and personally. When Temple published an attempt to restate Christian doctrine in *Mens Creatrix*, he said that the master-influences on his life were St John, Plato and Robert Browning; all of whom were favourites of Jowett. Hinchliff believes that, though he may not have known it, Temple stood in the tradition of ideas created, though only in the broadest outline, by Jowett. Temple made liberal theology acceptable in the mainstream of Christian thought.

This book is the most serious contribution for some years to the history of the development of religious theology in England. It is not easy to suppose that it is wholly right. Those sermons of Jowett are sometimes rather awful, and sometimes very mockable. To believe in the seminal divinity of an academic who uttered them, even if many of them are true or pious or warm-hearted, requires us to summon up our sense of the gap between performance and effect. It is possible that a loyal Balliol man has overstated what was achieved by a famous Master of his college. Nevertheless the book cannot fail to make us think hard about something considerable in the development of English ideas.

People in the Book

J. R. Porter

PETER CALVOCRESSI
Who's Who in the Bible
269pp. Viking, £10.95.
01670 81182

Unlike other books with somewhat similar titles, this volume does not aim to mention every person in the Bible. Like *Who's Who* itself, it is selective, and, as with that work, while some famous people clearly select themselves, others seem to owe their inclusion to the compiler's judgment. Of course, one must accept Peter Calvoocressi's freedom of choice, but some of his omissions are odd, especially in view of his statement that he is writing about the people of the Bible. For example, while there is an entry for the Shulamite, a purely literary creation, and for the Song of Songs, there is none for the Preacher, whose book reveals a very distinctive individual.

Calvoocressi's main purpose is "to record the facts stated in the Bible about each of the persons listed", and this means that some entries are extremely brief. Otherwise, we are generally given a straightforward, accurate and succinct summary of what the Bible says as it stands. Again, however, there are some lapses. Thus, in recounting the tale of the three soldiers in 1 Esdras, the author tells us the three unsuccessful proposals but not the successful one, which is, crowned by the famous words "Magna est veritas et praevalet". There are not a few errors of fact. Herod Antipas and Herod Agrippa are confused (it was the latter who met

a dramatic end. The Ark of the Covenant was some four feet long, not forty-five feet; Nehemiah did not build the Second Temple; it is wrong to say that none of the four kings after Jeroboam I reigned for more than two years, since Baasha at least lasted for twenty-four. In the modern manner, the author is apt to discover sexual allusions which are not really there. Jezebel, he tells us, painted her face in order to seduce Jehu; her words to him, however, can scarcely be called inviting.

But there are two things which give *Who's Who in the Bible* a distinctive quality and charm. First, as well as information, the author provides his own appraisal of the leading characters, particularly Moses, Jesus and Paul. We see the Bible through the eyes of a man whose heroes are Socrates, Montaigne and Beethoven, and his judgments are often fresh, lively and thought-provoking, even if they sometimes surprise – Joel is "cultivated and rational", Malachi "nice but muddled". Jeremiah "could have been a sort of Gilbert White of Selborne". Second, considerable attention is devoted to how these figures have lived on in later literature and art, and even in popular speech. Here we see a well-stocked and cultivated mind in operation that does not confine itself to the obvious, but frequently points us to recondite and unusual sources. All this makes an entertaining study. Those who dip into Peter Calvoocressi's book will be greatly enriched if they are stimulated to read, or read again, some of the literature mentioned, and to look, or look again, at the relevant paintings and sculpture, whose location the author is careful to give us.

Through a glass darkly

Leszek Kolakowski

DAVID MCELLEAN
Marxism and Religion
200pp. Macmillan. £27.50 (paperback, £7.95).
0333 146291

David McLellan enjoys a well-deserved reputation as one of the most learned and productive historians of Marxist thought. His works include a study of the young Marx, another of Marx's left-Hegelian background, as well as a biography of the Master – a reliable and solid book, even though somewhat lifeless in comparison with the sparkling and exuberant life written by Richard Pridemore (this best biography of Marx ever written has not been translated into English, as far as I know). Professor McLellan's own attitude to Marx, while sympathetic as a whole, is by no means uncritical, dogmatic or biased. Being both a Marx scholar and a Catholic convert, he is well equipped to give a concise general survey of the inextricable and unresolving conflict between Marxist ideology and religious faith.

To those familiar with that history, *Marxism and Religion* does not offer much new knowledge or new insight; it is, however, instructive and clear and it will, no doubt, be most helpful to all those who want to know whether anti-religious zeal, so spectacularly displayed in persecution in communist states, was irremovably built into their ideological framework or whether it may be removed without the collapse of the whole.

While noticing, in the introduction, that "the contribution of Marxists to our understanding of religion seems, often in contrast to those writing in a Weberian or Durkheimian tradition, to be usually very poor", the author explains Engels's and Lenin's hostility to religion by the socially reactionary character of the Christian Churches that they knew from experience, and then goes on: "The question therefore confronting religious believers with progressive social and political views is whether, without prejudicing their faith, they can present a face in which Marxists can see reflected much of their own aspirations for humanity." McLellan thus seems not only to blame Christians for having been so little "progressive" that they incurred the just wrath of Marxists, but to suggest, on top of this, that they now under themselves to Marxists by adopting political ideas more to their liking. Having been for decades witnesses of a rule, often genocidal and always and everywhere highly oppressive, anti-cultural and anti-religious, conducted in the name of Marxist doctrine, should Christians measure their "progressism" (whatever that means) by an allegiance to Marxist "aspirations for humanity"? Not for a moment can I imagine McLellan to be so naive as to believe that the political history of Marxist ideology can be dismissed as just a mistake, that we may forget the uncountable piles of corpses, produced for the sake of the radiant future without "alienation", or disregard all the abysmal economic, social and cultural failures of communism and go back to the liberating potential of "genuine" Marxism (and McLellan certainly knows that this liberating potential was very accurately perceived in the nineteenth century, long before Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Beria and Mao, by many people who soberly predicted that Marxisian socialism, if implemented, would result in the worst tyranny ever). Neither can I suppose that his example of progressive Christianity is incarnated in the Russian official Church, a helpless and pathetic department of the ruling Soviet hierarchy.

It would be very unjust, though, to judge

McLellan's study by such awkward statements – which, for that matter, run counter to what he writes elsewhere and of which the purpose is perhaps to escape the displeasure of "liberation theologians" and other progressive souls.

Marxists, with very few exceptions, took up the topic of religious worship only in terms of its social and political significance – as an expression of mental helplessness on the part of the masses, a mystifying "form" of class-consciousness, a product of ignorance, a cunning device of the powerful to prevent the oppressed from revolting, etc.: hardly ever did they bother to reflect upon the claims of religious faith to truth – such claims having been dismissed ages ago, in their view, by the enlightened minds of the past. Usually their theories either reproduce the schemes of the French Enlightenment or enrich them with philosophizing, in young Hegelian or Feuerbachian style, about religious alienation. Being incapable of imagining that religion can be anything else than an expression of certain secular needs, and thus insisting that, if one looks more closely into its core, it turns out not to be religion at all, they could not come up with many original ideas on the subject. His famous dictum about the "opium of the people" Marx took over from Bruno Bauer, the analogy between religious and economic alienation from Moses Hess, and the expression "scientific socialism" from Proudhon.

Still, within the common general framework, Marxists differed somewhat from one another in their approach to the "religious phenomenon". McLellan begins his story, naturally enough, with the ancestral couple themselves. Marx's comments on the subject are sketchy, and scattered through his numerous writings, but their general tendency is clear enough. Religion is a fantastic self-projection that is produced just so long as men fail to be aware of their social alienation and its sources. Any attempts – and there were many in his time, mainly in France, but some in Germany as well – to combine religious imagery with socialism, or to look for religious inspiration in propagating socialist doctrine, are, of course, strongly condemned. Communism means a radical break with the mythological legacy, and the happy communist future will not even need atheism as a negation of this superstitious heritage, since people will affirm their humanity directly, without mediating it through anti-religion. Even though he did not recommend the suppression of religion by violence, Marx advocated the struggle for "freedom from religion" as a major task of the workers' party, instead of being satisfied with the bourgeois idea of "freedom of conscience".

Engels's approach was more empirical, but his remarks on primitive religion, McLellan argues, are simply taken over from Edward B. Tylor and there is nothing specifically Marxist in them. More often than not, he explains religious beliefs by the intellectual poverty of primitive men, rather than by social conditions. His remarks on the beginning of Christianity ("of dubious value", as McLellan says, most politely) are based on Bauer's speculations and fail even to make a coherent whole (early Christianity as a revolutionary movement of the lowest classes and as an expression of a general despair of society, facing the power of Rome). Engels's interpretation of religious struggles in the era of the German Reformation in terms of class conflict (Zimmermann was his main source) is no less obsolete by today's standards, and his belief that the masses of his time were almost totally indifferent to religion was wishful thinking, rather than a result of research.

The attitude of German Social Democracy towards religion was mainly shaped by the popular Darwinism of Ernst Haeckel. Religious faith was declared a private matter, but most of the leaders and theorists accepted as a matter of course that it was incompatible with the socialist world-view. While Karl Kautsky was more knowledgeable than Engels in matters concerning early Christianity, his explanations, seen from the viewpoint of contemporary scholarship, are confused and unconvincing. The same applies to Heinrich Cunow's theory about the origin of religious beliefs. Austro-Marxists, however, especially Max Adler, took a more positive approach and tried to show that there is no fundamental clash between the Marxist theory of history and their

own rational religion. Regrettably, McLellan does not discuss Antonio Labriola's interesting reflections on the subject.

As to Russian and Soviet Marxists – the next topic of the book – they were satisfied with repeating the time-honoured tenets: religion is an expression of the primitive stage of human development, it has served the oppressing classes and it is bound to disappear with the progress of mankind. Lenin's hatred of all religions is well known. As to the incident of the "God-builders" philosophy, it was barely more than an attempt to adorn the materialist cult of humanity with a spuriously religious phraseology. The anti-religious struggle, proclaimed first as the task of the party, must have inevitably justified the persecutions of religion in the new communist State, once the State itself was supposed to carry out the party programme.

The target of the next part of McLellan's book is Gramsci and the Frankfurt School. Gramsci, while subtler and more historically oriented than the theorists of the Second International, was interested in the history of the Church mainly as the example *par excellence* of the successful domination of the masses by a powerful ideological organism and tried to draw from its history some lessons that might be of practical use in the Communist Party's struggle for cultural hegemony. McLellan then gives us a rather cursory survey of Frankfurt School theorists: Walter Benjamin, the most original mind among them, made a number of interesting observations, which, however, had very little to do with Marxist doctrine. Lucien Goldmann and Ernst Bloch close this part of the book.

The following chapter deals with contemporary communist politics, including "dialogue" and the various attempts of Western communist parties to devise a new, less crude phraseology that might result in Christian-Marxist co-operation on social issues. Latin-American liberation theology is another example of a shift in traditional ideological conflict: its advocates espouse the cause of social revolution in Latin-American countries as a Christian one, specifically endorsed by the Gospels. McLellan is somewhat vague about the question that naturally arises in this context: what remains of Christianity once "salvation" is identified with "liberation", and the latter conceived in communist terms? Should it be "liberation" à la Cambodia? Or Vietnamese, or Tibetan, or Albanian? This is not a trivial question; "liberation" did occur in all those places under that very name; and there is quite a gap between the Christian general "option for the poor" and a revolutionary ideology which does not exclude the possibility that the only medicine for South American poverty is Soviet-sponsored despotism. It is a pity that McLellan leaves such questions aside.

The Marxist movement has been repeatedly depicted as a religious phenomenon, and McLellan, in his concluding remarks, argues that the comparison is implausible when the content of Marxist faith is spoken of, and fitting only in so far as it applies to almost any mass movement. He does not, of course, deny the obvious fact that all through history Churches have played a political role, and that one may most easily find examples of how they used their power to prevent the grievances of the poor from being expressed; but it is not difficult to show examples (which, for that matter, do not run counter to Marxist doctrine) of religious movements that voiced and asserted those grievances; and no general "reductionist" theory may be inferred from an accumulation of such stories. McLellan believes that Marx constructed his view of religion by generalizing from what he observed in nineteenth-century Europe. This might be true, so far as it goes, but we should add that it was not just a case of sloppy induction; Marx's dismissal of all religious claims, and his prophecies about the imminent disappearance of the entire religious heritage of mankind (no less false than most of his predictions), were rooted in his version of "humanism" as an all-embracing *Weltschauung* which could never assimilate any genuine religious feelings and beliefs; there is no point in talking about religion unless that includes the belief that the whole realm of worldly experience is a medium whereby the Great Spirit expresses itself, and that human beings and the created of good and evil ready-

made, and not of their own making. There is no way in which one could insert those beliefs into the Marxist image of the world, however loosely the word "Marxist" might be employed.

The Marxist theory or critique of religion is not a particularly interesting subject. What the "classics" had to say in historical matters is mostly wrong; philosophical speculation on religious alienation adds little to what Marx took over from his colleagues and from Feuerbach; his predictions failed to materialize. The really topical and interesting issue is (ideologically motivated) religious oppression in communist-ruled countries, and this is surprisingly omitted in McLellan's book. That *Marxism and Religion* is on theory and not on its practical implementation is not a plausible excuse for this omission, as such a separation is impossible in the case under scrutiny: Marxists themselves keep saying that their doctrine is nothing if not incarnated in a political movement – even though they might quarrel about where the most glorious example of this incarnation is to be found. It is an undeniable fact that in all communist countries without exception religion has been a target of repression; while the severity of repression has varied in time and space, to be sure, the ultimate goal – to eradicate religious life – has never been given up. There is a big difference between the horrors and atrocities that have been perpetrated against churches, clergy and believers in the Soviet Union, Maoist China, Vietnam or Albania, on the one hand, and the situation in contemporary Poland, on the other. But the position of the Catholic Church in Poland today is entirely due to its dogged resistance.

There is no communist country where believers are not discriminated against in various ways, and in which a real separation of State and Church has been implemented. Such separation means that religious beliefs, as a "private matter", are irrelevant to a citizen's situation; this implies, for instance, that a practising Catholic has the same chances, say, of participating in the political power machinery as a member of the ruling, avowedly, anti-religious, party. The reason for persecution is not just Marxist doctrine, with its pretensions to being "scientific", but the sheer fact that what communism is about is total power and total control of all sides of social life, including human minds: the full State-ownership of people. While this ideal cannot be achieved and many – increasingly many, thank God – concessions are being made by the rulers under the pressure of social, economic and cultural reality, it has not been explicitly abandoned; and we have seen, in the history of communist states, uncountable examples of concessions which have been given under duress and subsequently withdrawn once the ruling party felt safer in the saddle. Perhaps Albanian rules are right when they boast of their state being the only truly Marxist-Leninist country in the world: they do not even try to set up fictitious bodies of "patriotic clergy", or other pseudo-religious organizations, under their command; religious worship is simply forbidden, under threat of severe punishment, including death.

I read once a Soviet anti-religious brochure (I have regrettably forgotten the author) stating that even in the Bible it is written that "there is no God" (the Psalmist says, indeed, "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God'", Psalm 14:1). As a sample of the scientific *Weltschauung*, this may well support what McLellan says at the end of his book: "few would dispute that there is a better future for religion than for Marxism".

A History of Marxist-Leninist Atheism and Soviet Antireligious Policies, being Volume One of A History of Soviet Atheism in Theory and Practice, and the Believer by Dmitry V. Pospelovsky, has just been published (189pp. Macmillan, £27.50; paperback, £12.95, 0333 423267). After a discussion of the philosophical foundations for the antireligious policies, the author traces their application, from Lenin's Decree (January 1918) depriving the Church of legal status, property and teaching functions, through the propagandist activities of the League of the Militant Godless in the 1920s and 30s, some concessions to believers during the Nazi invasion, to the renewal of the atheistic offensive before and after Khrushchev. 1988 marks the thousandth anniversary of the accepted start of Christianity in Russia.

Keeping women in order

Brian Golding

RAYMONDE FOREVILLE and GILLIAN KEIR
The Book of St Gilbert
385pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £55.
0198222602

In twelfth-century Europe it was commonly said, with understandable exaggeration, that the whole world was turning Cistercian. But of course the Cistercians were not alone in this extraordinary period of *renovatio* and *reformatio*. Everywhere we find new expressions of monastic ideals and spirituality: the Carthusians, Premonstratensians, Augustinian canons and other more local groups, such as those based around Obazine in the Limousin or Tiron near Chartres. At an even more local level are found the individuals, the holy men and women, hermits and anchorites, whose relationships with monastic communities were complex and ambiguous. Such stirrings of reform and new configurations of the monastic life were not halted at the Channel: ecclesiastical, political and cultural ties ensured their free passage into England, where they even reached the distant and sparsely populated Lincolnshire fens. Here, in or around 1131, just three years after the first Cistercians arrived in England, Gilbert, the parish priest of Sempringham, established a group of seven women anchoresses in an enclosure attached to the parish church. This was to be the nucleus of the only monastic order created in medieval England.

One of the most striking features of the period was the growing desire and demand of religious women for a place in the new spiritual commonwealth. The aristocratic Hildegard of Bingen was an adviser of emperors and popes, while in England the anchoress Christina of Markyate was the confidante of the abbot of St Albans. But the great majority, like Gilbert's followers, remain anonymous and unknown. The reformers' attitude to them was ambivalent: on the one hand there was an increasing awareness of the contribution of female spirituality, on the other, a mistrust, typified by the Cistercians, of women in religious life. Only a

few reformers such as Robert of Arbrissel, the founder of Fontevraud, and Gilbert were prepared to give a full place to women in their foundations. Indeed, both their orders were conceived as double ones, with their communities ruled by women, not men.

The Cistercians have attracted more attention from contemporaries and modern historians alike than their allies, imitators and sometimes rivals in other orders. Only now is this imbalance being rectified, as it is perceived that the latter are as representative of their age as the white monks. Raymonde Foreville was one of the first to realize the importance of Gilbert of Sempringham for an understanding of twelfth-century religious movements, when in 1943 she published an edition in Paris of the canonization process of Gilbert, together with other documents illustrating his order's early history. This work contained a number of errors and omissions that were inevitable, given the time and place of its production, and it has never been readily available in England. Now Professor Foreville (ably assisted by Gillian Keir, who is responsible for the translation of the Latin text) has given us a new edition of *The Book of St Gilbert*, containing much material not included in 1943, representing the culmination of many years' further scholarship. This is a worthy addition to the exemplary list of Oxford Medieval Texts. It includes the *Life of Gilbert*, written shortly after his canonization in 1202, the dossiers of miracles prepared for the canonization process, together with material relating to the revolt of the Gilbertine lay-brethren in the mid-1160s. Together these texts provide a major source for the understanding of the dynamics of monastic reform in twelfth-century England, while the collection of miracle stories, though relatively small, illustrates not only contemporary attitudes to miracles and healing, but also social and medical conditions of the time. The lengthy and wide-ranging introduction places them in their context and forms a lively interpretative essay which sheds light on many developments in twelfth-century Church and society. The whole should be required reading for all historians of the period and for those with a wider interest in women's spirituality in the Middle Ages.

Mnemonic miniatures

Ruth Morse

AVRIL HENRY (Editor)
The Mirror of Mans Salvation: A Middle English translation of "Speculum Humanae Salvationis"
347pp. Aldershot: Scolar. £35.
085967168

The *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* was one of several encyclopaedic medieval compilations which collected images and interpretations in order to offer men a Mirror, that is, an invitation (to see a reflection of their own state). The original Latin text (from the first quarter of the fourteenth century) was not only exceptionally popular, but inspired numerous vernacular translations. A well-known source-book for preachers, it had in many of its early editions tell-tale indexes, which enabled the hard-pressed priest to find stories, images and correspondences for sermons. And if it was not equally important for private devotion, as a stimulus to meditation, it becomes hard to account for the illustrations and the care many copyists took to place them near the relevant portions of the text. Although the history of the iconography is obscure, as is the provenance of the *Speculum* itself, it is clear that the cycle of images was coherent, and was sometimes detached from the words. Of the almost 400 surviving versions of the *Speculum*, only about a third are illustrated, as Evelyn Silber showed in her unpublished Cambridge doctoral thesis on them. Silber thought the miniatures served a mnemonic function subordinate to the text, that they were meant to recall topic headings to readers trained in the art of memory, and Avril Henry follows suit in her critical edition *The Mirror of Mans Salvation*. This

is too simple. As Silber recognized, many of the illustrations recall other illustrations, creating a parallel, non-verbal system of typological reference. When these cycles of images were expanded in other books, artists continued to elaborate their own systems of signs. The images' independence from the words they appear to accompany suggests that in some books they claimed equal status to the stories which explained them. So far from being the unimaginative copying of incompetent artists dominated by workshop models, the miniatures form a simultaneous pictorial commentary of their own. It is an objection to Dr Henry's book that it does not take the pictures so seriously, but treats them as a decorative, if important, accompaniment.

No illustrated English translation seems to have survived. The *Mirror* – which is also textually incomplete – has been published once before, in an unsatisfactory form. This new edition is welcome. But it is a bibliographic bastard: while the text represents an early fifteenth-century English version of the Latin original, the illustrations are a selection of the woodcuts which were printed in German versions, entitled *Der Spiegel des menschen Bedults*, of a different textual tradition. Fifty years later, by reprinting only a portion of the German illustrations, Avril Henry has seriously abridged the picture-cycle. One would not disturb the integrity of a verbal composition, and it is hard to defend her method here. Like many reconstructions of early music, it represents something which never existed. This unequal partnering has been done for the sake of recreating the look of a medieval book; and so it is a further pity that the simultaneous voice of marginal commentary has not been retained in the margin but reduced to footnotes, where it is almost undecipherable.

A governing partnership

Nigel Saul

CHRIS GIVEN-WILSON
The English Nobility in the Middle Ages: The fourteenth-century political community
222pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £15.95.
0710204914

The systematic study of the English medieval nobility was begun in the 1930s by K. B. MacFarlane. Its aim was to view the growth of political society in a broader context than was possible in the Stubbsian framework. Stubbs's interpretation had been strongly royalist in sympathy, seeing the development of the constitution largely in terms of the achievements of individual kings such as Edward I and Henry IV; and except in the discussion of the Great Charter little attention had been given to the influence on events of the kings' greater subjects. The result was an account which MacFarlane considered unduly narrow in focus. It all but ignored the role of the nobility as the king's natural councillors and partners in government; and it did not explain why they, unlike their Continental counterparts, were able to enjoy almost undisturbed possession of power for 900 years. MacFarlane aimed to provide a comprehensive study of the higher nobility from the thirteenth century to the early sixteenth. Sadly, however, he died before completing the task, leaving a series of articles and the text of his Ford Lectures of 1953. But together these were sufficient to bring about a revolution in English medieval studies.

MacFarlane's work dazzled by its sheer brilliance, and deterred any of his pupils from taking up and completing the task that he had begun. Only in recent years, with the rise of a younger generation of scholars who did not know him in person, has the subject again received detailed attention. It is appropriate therefore that it is one of these younger scholars who should have risen to the challenge, in *The English Nobility in the Middle Ages*, of attempting to sum up the current state of knowledge.

This is not the book which MacFarlane himself would have written. It covers a narrower chronological span than he would have

approved (it is chiefly concerned with the fourteenth century rather than "the late middle ages" as a whole); and it omits consideration of topics such as military service and religion which figured in his own work. On the other hand, it covers a larger social grouping than "the nobility" as he defined them: that is to say, it includes not only the peerage but also the gentry – or the higher and the lower nobility. MacFarlane's own work was chiefly concerned with the former. Chris Given-Wilson, on the other hand, gives equal weight to both groups; and while he agrees that the topmost nobility became a more exclusive and exalted élite, he also stresses the growing dominance of the gentry in the affairs of their communities.

Behind this growth of interest in the gentry lies the suspicion that it was they who were the real arbiters of power in late medieval England. Without their support a magnate could achieve nothing, whereas with it he could establish rule over his country and make himself a force to be reckoned with in national affairs. This the gentry knew well – hence their ability to play the game so obviously to their advantage. But by no means all of the cards were stacked in their favour. The nobility, as Given-Wilson reminds us, had much to offer that made their favour worth seeking. They had offices and fees in their gift; they had the power to influence appointments to offices in the royal administration; and above all they could offer the advantages of belonging to the mutual support system that was the magnate affinity. They were not insubstantial attractions, and they gave the nobility the means not only to pick and choose between men but also to establish an identity between the gentry's interests and their own. Strictly speaking, then, the late-medieval political structure was neither gentry-led nor magnate-led. It was, as Given-Wilson rightly says, "a partnership of the governing . . . for the mutual benefit of those who mattered in a region".

The kind of balance which Given-Wilson strikes here is characteristic of his approach throughout. He is sensible and judicious, but also when necessary incisive. He writes briskly, and only in the chapter on the peerage does the pace slacken. As an introduction to the medieval nobility his book is ideal.

Making a golden age myth

Christine Woodhead

CORNELL H. FLEISCHER
Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600)
363pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £30.10.
069105469

Recent specialist monographs, combining a sophisticated historical method with a sound grasp of Ottoman sources, are at long last beginning to interpret the Ottoman polity to a wider audience. Cornell H. Fleischer's well-documented and finely argued study of Mustafa Ali, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire*, examines the work of one of the most prolific and influential Ottoman writers. As a discerning and fearless critic of politics and society, and as the author of a major Ottoman history, Ali's views are of singular importance for an understanding of the sixteenth-century Ottoman state.

In longevity and in the range of its influence the empire of the Ottoman Turks rivalled, if it did not surpass, that of the Habsburgs or the Romanovs; yet its study has been much neglected, and has suffered more than its fair share of misconception, stereotype and prejudice. Paradoxically, part of the blame for negative scholarly attitudes towards the Ottomans lies with writers such as Ali. A rhetoric of political decline developed from the late sixteenth century, creating the persuasive myth of an earlier golden age, identified pre-eminently with the reign of Süleyman (1520-66). An obvious nostalgia among Ottoman writers for the earlier period deceived many later scholars into taking

at face value their evaluation of the State. Ali was one of the first to sense increasing corruption and confusion in government; he yearned for a system in which its three branches – military-administrative, bureaucratic and learned-judicial – remained discrete, with promotion justified by merit and experience, and the value of traditional learning respected. Yet his views about the State, and ultimately his perception of Ottoman history, did not accurately reflect past reality; rather, his ideals developed out of a combination of personal career frustration and a fundamental belief in the balancing forces of the traditional Muslim polity. He is constantly critical of transfers between the three major branches of government, yet he himself veered between them all. He decries nepotism and irregular promotion, but often in the very poem intended to accompany an opportunist request for a new posting.

After a "life and times" section on Ali, to provide the context for the development of his thought, Fleischer focuses upon two principal aspects of his subject. First, Ali's concern with *kanun* (the body of sultanic non-shari'ah law), which helped establish the golden age myth, is shown to be an extrapolation from the past, not a reliable reflection of it. This is closely bound up with his fixation upon the post of chancellor (the guardian and interpreter of *kanun*), which he requested repeatedly, but never obtained. Second, Fleischer's analysis of Ali's view of history – part dynastic cycle, part Ottoman legitimacy, and part the past as teacher – shows the reflective intellectual standing back from the professional rat-race.

The book is not only a major contribution to Ottoman and Middle Eastern studies, but of interest also to historians of early modern Europe, or of the development of political, social and ideological systems.

The Graduate Faculty

For everyone in the Graduate Faculty, A through Z, write or call for a Bulletin: Graduate Faculty, New School for Social Research, 65 Fifth Avenue, NYC 10003 (212) 740-5710

A turning-point – and after

Paul Griffiths

CARL DÄHLHAUS
Schoenberg and the New Music: Essays
Translated by Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton
305pp. Cambridge University Press, £30,
0521 332516

Eighty years have passed, but still Schoenberg's move into atonality remains deeply problematic. Suddenly music was released from obligations (to a key or mode) that had been unquestionable; but it was released too from whatever theories had been devised to understand how compositions are understood, since those theories had always presupposed harmonic progression and therefore tonality. One may flinch from the vulgar view that "modern music" is meaningless, but by all the traditional criteria it is; and we are still very far from any consensus about how atonal works are perceived. This is slightly alarming, since we now have an enormous repertoire of works which we may think we understand while having very little idea as to how we understand them. And because the aesthetic backing is so weak, we tend to value pieces according to historical criteria or demonstrable structure. There is very little talk of the beautiful in, for example, the Stockhausen literature: chronological precedence and constructional rigour are almost unthinkingly accepted as the yardsticks.

Carl Dahlhaus is surely not alone in being at once fascinated and troubled by this present condition of music, nor is he alone in recognizing that the philosophy of modern music cannot be established by dictat. But he is unusual in the cool sanity with which he exposes the problems, in clear prose that makes a marvelously smooth entry into English in the translation by Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton.

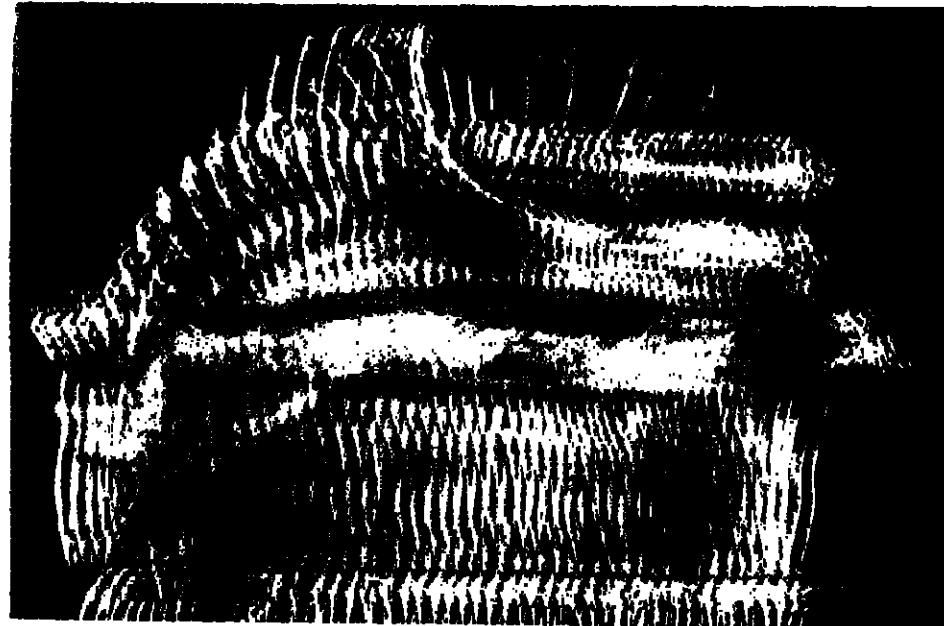
Not the least of their difficulties was surely the rendering of the title. Most of these essays appeared in Dahlhaus's *Schoenberg und andere: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Neuen Musik* (1978), but in English "the New Music" has never been quite as convincing a formation, or a concept, as in German. No doubt this is partly because English music missed the revolution of modernism, and partly because English composers have resisted theorizing and polemics. It is not surprising that Dahlhaus should not refer to English music at all, but nor is he much concerned with French: there are two passing references to Debussy, just a few more to Boulez. Only Stravinsky, Scriabin and John Cage have important seats at a musical banquet otherwise reserved for Austrian and German guests, with Schoenberg very much in the place of honour and Adorno as court jester.

Fully a third of the book is devoted explicitly to Schoenberg, and there are only two essays, out of twenty-eight, in which his name does not appear (not insignificantly those two are concerned with the dissolution of the concept of the work of art, which was never a problem for Schoenberg). Adorno, too, is a constant point of reference, quietly welcomed as an exemplar of the seriousness of thinking about music, and as a writer who recognized the central importance of Schoenberg, but always to be tested in his assumptions by one who has no such social-critical axe to grind. Dahlhaus is, indeed, suspicious of generalizations of any kind, which is one reason why he is so good at unpicking the contradictions in Adorno, as in Schoenberg. And the fact that he concentrates on these two men can hardly be seen as a limitation, not only because this is still the principal and crucial area of aesthetic debate as far as twentieth-century music is concerned, but also because Dahlhaus's contributions to that debate have implications, which he partly follows up, reaching far into the music of the 1970s and 1980s.

The particular importance of the most recent music, not least for a historian writing from the Germany of the "new Romantics", lies in the revival of tonality, which has been such a feature of music during the past fifteen years, and which exacerbates the problem of whether Schoenberg's breach of harmonic convention really did change the nature of music once and for all. Since Schoenberg, nobody has been able to compose, totally without being aware that existence is not God-given, but if that

brings a new artificiality into tonal composition, does it necessarily bring too archaism and irony? In the 1920s and 1930s, with examples ranging from Stravinsky's neo-classicism to Shostakovich's parodic bombast, it may certainly have seemed so, but is it possible now that the wound has been healed? Can composers be at the same time tonal and authentic, without simply forgetting the recent past or failing to reflect on the aesthetic meaning of what they do? Can the progressive force of tonal harmony, not felt without severe compromise since the late works of Stravinsky and Schoenberg were written forty years ago, be rediscovered in some new dialectic that will also take into account the seemingly quite opposed tenets of Stockhausen and Boulez? Is the "new tonality" a way forward or merely an escape from contemporary problems into some invented past? Is there, most crucially, going to be a way forward any more, or are we to be stuck in a perpetual post-modern recycling of what has gone before?

Dahlhaus of course offers no answers to



Tipon Mili's depiction of a complete pas de bourée, 1947. It is reproduced from *The Fugitive Gesture: Masterpieces of dance photography by William A. Ewing* (240pp. Thames and Hudson, £25, 0 500 541299).

these questions. He is much more concerned, and valuably concerned, with clarifying the problems, and he becomes judgmental only in condemning the sort of creative arrogance with which composers have absolved themselves of any need for philosophical reflection, behaving with crude opportunism in appropriating anything from the storehouse of the past. It is one thing to submit previous music to a thorough rethinking, as Stravinsky did in his *Symphony in C*, for instance; it is quite another to assume Mahlerian gestures as a guarantee of emotional depth and artistic suffering.

From this comes Dahlhaus's decisive rejection of Dieter Schnebel's view that Schoenberg's late tonal works are "re-tonal", showing, in Schnebel's words, "that history ceases to progress only in one direction, only forwards. It can now evolve not only forwards but also backwards. This fact shows that the composer has history itself at his disposal." Dahlhaus counters this with a vehemence that is perhaps more than inevitable for a German born in 1928: the past cannot be so easily manipulated, or, as he says, "the idea that the direction of history can be reversed is incomprehensible without an explicit philosophy of time – which Schnebel fails to provide. Schnebel's fragment of theory is an aphorism which breaks off without opening the way to an advance in thought." Yet his own explanation, though it may certainly be subtler, is not backed by anything philosophically more substantial than Schnebel offers. Having noted that both Schoenberg's tonal and his twelve-note works share a motive variety of construction (which leaves a lot of questions unanswered), he remarks that history "had lost the power to dictate to composers what was allowed and what was forbidden." Where here is the "explicit philosophy of time"? And where is it when he proposes, however plausibly, that "the concept of the 'one' history which the philosophy of history assumes to exist is doubtful and may be suspected of being a myth. What really happens are histories – in the plural; at different places and under diverging circumstances"? Maybe a phrase so definite as "what really happens" should be a

warning when it comes from one normally unwilling to force his way.

Schoenberg's tonal works of the 1930s and 1940s are crucial texts, as Adorno recognized, because they confound the idea, promulgated by the composer himself, of an ineluctable development throughout the *oeuvre*. In 1916 he abandoned his Second Chamber Symphony, apparently because he no longer found it possible to compose tonally; but then in 1939 he quickly brought the work to completion, having returned to tonal composition by way of two mammoth amplifications of baroque works (the Cello Concerto after Monn and the String Quartet Concerto after Handel) carried out in 1932–3. If one is concerned with historical constraints on composers, then this turn in Schoenberg's music is as significant as the atonal adventure that took place a quarter-century before, even if the abandonment of key is bound to be seen as more generally momentous.

Another difference is the difficulty one might feel in construing the Cello Concerto as

1932–3 are topics to which he keeps returning. But the same problem informs his view of Scriabin as creating kitsch because his connection with tradition was a pretence, a use of conventional formal models that masked the real nature of his musical ideas. It underlies his analyses of what is new in the rhythm of Stravinsky and Webern. It runs through a beautiful essay on Webern's orchestration of the six-part rite from the *Musical Offering*, in which he concludes with the resonant thought that, because the instrumentation exposes the music's "modern" motivic construction but works against its "baroque" linear continuity, Webern's version "makes us aware . . . that the idea of a truly satisfactory instrumental presentation of the rite is located in the no-man's-land between what was not yet possible in Bach's time and what is no longer possible in our own." And it is the ground theme of the twelve essays on Schoenberg even where they depart from the atonal and "re-tonal" crises.

Schoenberg's own view of himself as impelled to be free but compelled to operate within tradition, as a "conservative revolutionary", is seen by Dahlhaus more or less explicitly as the model for a whole group of other contradictions in the composer's thinking. There is, for instance, the dialectic of "idea" and "presentation", the one revealed by creative intuition and not to be questioned or compromised, the other made by the composer, using the conscious arts of his technique, to be the perfect embodiment of the idea. As Dahlhaus points out, the definition of "idea" is not obvious: it may, at different times, be a theme, or a chord, or an abstract note grouping, or a formal principle, so that what Schoenberg thought of as the "idea" of one piece might be an aspect of "presentation" in another.

There is a related confusion concealed in the celebrated slogan of "the emancipation of the dissonance". The term "dissonance" is contextual: it is not an inherent characteristic of a chord but a quality determined by the function of that chord within a particular musical style (a C major triad, for example, is not a suitable final consonance for Pärt). In other words, a "dissonance" is not an object but a relationship, and to emancipate it may therefore involve more difficulty than might appear. Similarly, when Schoenberg speaks of removing dissonances from their diatonic functions (not letting them resolve) but yet giving them an adequate "presentation", he disparages a hallowed context while making unsubstantiated claims for a new one. By what authority was he able to do this? Dahlhaus pulls back from agreement with Schoenberg's extreme view that the genius must be responsible to his intuitions (again the German history of his childhood may provide an incentive), yet recognizes that it was this very determination in Schoenberg's personality that gave him the power to go forward.

Because of this sense of moral and even religious mission, Schoenberg was able to retain a conviction in his creative will, and in his ability to impose that will even within a musical language in a state of utmost disrepair: the late tonal works, no less than the first atonal compositions, represent a triumph of the individual intending mind. One problem for his successors has been that of equalling such self-confidence without sharing Schoenberg's faith in himself as an Old Testament prophet. Brahms, when he composed, found music blowing back the knowledge that he was Brahms: what he did, when he was working effectively, was in perfect conformity with a language that he may reasonably have believed to have been unthought of not only by history but also by nature, to mention two authorities whose continuing away Dahlhaus fairly doubts. In their absence, in the absence of any certain basis of musical communication, what is there to determine whether a creative decision is acceptable, let alone whether it is a stroke of genius? Dahlhaus is unwilling to trust extra-musical arbiters. His essays on music in society point up both the slipshod thinking that lies behind "political" art and the poverty of the information and insight that have come out of any sociological interpretation of musical works. Similarly he sees tradition as an unreliable guide: if it has not been drawn so near to the creative self that it is no longer really external (the lack of such assimilation was Scriabin's

problem). And he certainly has doubts about the historical inevitability when it is transferred from the conditions of 1907–08 to those of the 1950s, when indeed history was, or histories were, very different.

This point he makes most forcefully in a remark on Stockhausen:

The aesthetic legitimacy of a work like *Gruppen* is based not on the logical manner with which historically inevitable conclusions were drawn but on the fact that the aesthetic plausibility of the result made people reconstruct the historical preconditions in such a way as to make it seem that they led up to the result.

Leaving aside the uncharacteristic lazy comparative (there is nothing in the world "like" *Gruppen*), Dahlhaus is revealed here trying to avoid the conclusion that Stockhausen's work is interesting solely or mainly for its serialization of tempos or its application to orchestral groupings of electronic principles of sound generation. Perhaps too his flight from the idea that atonality was historically inevitable is prompted by the wish to avoid saying, as well one might want to avoid saying, that Schoenberg's Second Quartet is important because it documents the emancipation of the dissonance. But what is the "aesthetic plausibility" he ascribes to *Gruppen* as something quite distinct from historical correctness and, presumably, technical proficiency? It is evidently an elusive quality: as Dahlhaus notes, if it has been detected it has never been stated, but rather people have given the old justifications from history and technique. Perhaps all along the best evidence has been waiting in the score, in Stockhausen's wilful excursions from his historically inevitable scheme, and most especially in the climactic swinging of a great brass chord from one to another of the three orchestras. In such moments, just possibly, one may hear the individual voice above the noise of history.

If Dahlhaus does not pursue this matter, it may be because he is not much engaged by anything achieved in music since Schoenberg's death in 1951. Quite apart from his serious doubts about the philosophical grounding for any immediate return to old-style tonality, he laments what he sees as a faltering in the production of autonomous works of art – though on this topic his arguments are very much conditioned by a historical inevitability all their own, since the relevant essays were written in 1969–70. At that time, when Stockhausen had gone furthest from conventional notation, when "aleatory music" was so much in vogue, and when composers were feeling the new air

of improvisation, it certainly seemed that the age of masterpieces was over. If it still does now (and I think it does), then there is new evidence to be examined, since Elliott Carter's quartets, Boulez's *Répons* and above all Stockhausen's seven-opera *Licht* cycle are surely designed as works of art at the most exalted level. Dahlhaus's shredding of the notion of free improvisation now seems rather beside the point: one needs to give some thought to why Boulez's *Le Marteau sans maître* has so much more "aesthetic plausibility" than *Répons*.

From what Dahlhaus has to say about temporal discontinuity in music, however, he might be unwilling to grant value to either work:

The individual self-contained section, instead of developing what has happened in a previous phase or preparing for a subsequent one, appears to be the pure present, an expanded moment in time. . . . The dividing caesura and the seemingly empty general pause make the listener, who had sensed a musical section as a single moment in time, quite suddenly aware that "time has passed". That is the only function of the seemingly functionless pauses.

But it is not. In the seventh movement of Messiaen's *Turangalila-symphonie*, for instance, sectional construction makes possible the effect of time moving in reverse (when one section repeats an earlier one backwards) or unfolding simultaneously at different rates. In a more complex work, such as *Le Marteau sans maître*, the restructuring of time made possible by "functionless" pauses is correspondingly more convoluted, and capable of a far richer analysis than Dahlhaus intimates.

The difficulty would seem to be that Dahlhaus retains, for reasons that the seriousness of his writing forces one to judge more moral than nostalgic, a reverence for developmental continuity. He is aware, of course, that the supports of musical development were, at the very least, deeply endangered by atonality, and that nothing is going to be gained now from "a blind grab into the biscuit tin of the past". He must be aware, too, that continuity of development is the key to the wholeness – the wholeness of the work of art and the wholeness of the creative personality – whose disintegrations in the present century are his concern. His Germanic inclinations may blind him to the potential significance of Debussy and Barraqué for his arguments, but his observations about the perilous state of music are acute, persuasive and remarkably all-inclusive. And despite them he holds to the hope that great composers and masterpieces will appear again, that there will be light at the end of the tunnel. Rather than suppose there never was any light at all.

Confusion of voices

Michael Tanner

HOWARD VOGT
Flagstad: Singer of the century
300pp. Seeker and Warburg, £20,
0 436 55800 9

Biographies of great singers, like almost all biographies, are disappointing, suggesting that some hard thought on the nature of the genre is needed. Howard Vogt's biography of Kirsten Flagstad, however, is not calculated to stimulate any kind of thought. In its low-keyed way it is one of the most bizarre books I have come to know. Vogt is, apparently, a baritone "especially noted for his interpretations of German Lieder and Mozart roles", but I think that "especially noted" must be taken in a relative sense. He certainly takes his own performing activities seriously enough to intersperse the narrative of Flagstad's life with wholly unrelated passages about his own, and with odd reviews of current opera performances which have no conceivable connection with her. And it seems that a large part of the book, perhaps most of it, is a translation of Aslaug Rein's Norwegian biography of Flagstad, which is not in itself a fault, but further attenuates the book's claim to be by, as opposed to about, Howard Vogt.

In spite of all that, there are long, fascinating passages, particularly about Flagstad's devotion to music. She is so often written about as if she neither knew nor cared for what she was singing about, and her interpretative powers

are so routinely dismissed as vague and superficial, that evidence of the depth of her study and feeling is welcome, though it shouldn't be necessary. When she first heard *Tristan* in Vienna in 1930, she was so emotionally exhausted by it that she wanted to leave after the first act. While she was no Callas, her commitment and musicianship, as well as her supremely beautiful voice, certainly place her among the very greatest singers of whom we have records. A study of her art which goes into close detail is badly needed, and it is a pity that Vogt, with his specialist training, has not even attempted to provide it.

On the purely biographical front, Vogt – or Rein – still seems to be less than wholly candid about Flagstad's return to Nazi-occupied Norway, and fails to deal at all with her long-lasting feud with the Wagnerian tenor Lauritz Melchior, or her vindictive treatment of her daughter, both chronicled puzzlingly by Edwin McCarthur, the American conductor whose career she did so much to promote. In spite of the conclusive evidence that he was not even minimally competent – a further episode a biographer should illuminate: she was evidently not the placid, stolid *Hausfrau* that she has so often been portrayed as, not least by herself. She seems, in fact, to have been a tormented and complicated woman, but for insight into the nature of her complexity, and its relationship to the curious stop-go character of her career, we shall have to wait for a biographer whose devotion is combined with shrewdness – and does not preclude being frank.

In the moment

Charles Fox

IAN CARR, DIGBY FAIRWEATHER and BRIAN PRIESTLEY
Jazz: The essential companion
562pp. Grafton, £17.95,
0 246 12741 4

The trouble with most jazz encyclopaedias is that they take so long to put together. By publication day the music has usually spawned a fresh array of up-and-coming youngsters. One virtue of *Jazz: The essential companion* is the impression it gives of being thoroughly abreast of what is going on. The young British saxophonist Courtney Pine is there as well as Loose Tubes. An essay on jazz rock acknowledges that the innovative peak of that fusion was reached by the end of the 1970s. The young-fogeyism of Wynton Marsalis receives as acute an evaluation as the abstract questing of Anthony Braxton.

The three authors, all of them musicians, write in totally different styles. Digby Fairweather, dealing with early and traditional jazz, is discursive and inclined to be anecdotal (he is lucky to have such juicy subjects as Joe Venuti and Jack Purvis, the latter better known for his life-style than for his music). Brian Priestley deals with Basie and Parker and the Modern Jazz Quartet, mostly sticking to facts but occasionally improvising (John Lewis's approach to piano playing is described as "delicate, even tentative, as if picking at a dish he would rather not eat").

Best of all is Ian Carr, covering a good deal of the past three decades, and doing so with a remarkable blend of objectivity and enthusiasm. He pays a handsome tribute to a West

Indian musician, the late Joe Harriott, only forty-four when he died in 1973 but lauded by Carr as "the father of European free jazz". And while Carr, in casual conversation, has often seemed sceptical about the achievements of free jazz, his article on that subject and his entry on Albert Ayler – one of a number of outstanding analyses – are models of concise and perceptive writing.

The proof of a reference book, of course, is in the using. And that does throw up a number of omissions. In his introduction Carr points out that musicians were sent questionnaires to be completed and returned. Procrastination may explain but cannot entirely excuse the absence of such important performers as the vibraphonist Walt Dickerson and the bassist Barre Phillips. And, just to concentrate on British musicians, quite a few depressingly minor "trad jazzers" are included but not Gerry Moore, the best of the pianists between the two world wars, still playing somewhere in a London hotel or obscure nightclub, or the late Mike Taylor, one of the most adventurous pianist-composers of the 1960s.

Turning to the more distant past, it is good to see praise showered on the likes of Pee Wee Russell, Dave Tough, Red Allen and Sid Catlett. A pity, though, that Dicky Wells's startling originality is seen, albeit admired, as a kind of comic turn. A pity, too, that no space could be found for the incisive clarinetist Sidney Arodin. Incidentally, one band Arodin recorded with in the mid-1930s was a pick-up group using the historically potent name of the New Orleans Rhythm Kings, a band that (to descend to nit-picking) is credited with recording for Okeh rather than American Decca and to have had Jess Stacy as its pianist instead of Terry Shand.

Image before sound

Jasper Rees

E. ANN KAPLAN
Rocking Around the Clock: Music television, postmodernism, and consumer culture
196pp. Methuen, £20. (paperback, £6.95),
0 416 33370 2
RICHARD MELTZER
The Aesthetics of Rock
346pp. New York: Da Capo. Paperback
\$10.95,
0 306 80287 2

Rock history is wired to technological progress: the electric guitar gave it life, and now the video, subordinating sound to image, is terminating it. *Rocking Around the Clock* analyses the role of MTV (music television), the American twenty-four-hour rock video channel, in this process. Ann Kaplan argues that television's strategy is "to keep us endlessly consuming in the hopes of fulfilling our desire", and MTV, with its alternation of four-minute videos and advertisements, epitomizes this policy. With 2,016 videos shown each week, "MTV simply takes over the history of rock and roll, flattening out all the distinct types into one continuous present". Its videos "gather up into themselves the previously distinct art modes, with their corresponding iconography, world views, myths, ideologies, specific techniques"; and its audience, formerly a mélange of disparate groups, becomes a "mass that absorbs . . . indiscriminately". Channel logos even announce that "MTV is LIFE".

Clearly this homogeneity makes MTV a singularly American phenomenon (significantly, the USA For Africa song was titled "We Are the World"). Kaplan also claims it is a post-modernist phenomenon, although she never really explains what this means. MTV is on the one hand a "decentered, fragmented text" drawing on disparate cultural influences which are on the other hand swallowed whole by a "uni-dimensional, commercialised" youth audience. Labelling something as "post-modernist" is a messy substitute for understanding it. The problem with her argument is that she also provides the evidence with which to dismantle it. She cites statistics suggesting that "videos featuring white males take up 83 per cent of the 24-hour flow"; that "only 11 per cent of MTV videos have central figures who are female"; and that, despite the popularity of

Tina Turner, Michael Jackson and Prince, the figures for black artists are even worse. Since black music is the pivot of American musical culture, and female stars remain important to it, the relative paucity of black and female musicians on MTV demolishes Kaplan's notion that the channel contains the history of popular music within itself.

Like MTV, Kaplan is sometimes guilty of "obliterating historical specificity". She attributes punk to the 1980s and *Look Back in Anger* to 1958; in her account of Live-Aid, Phil Collins performs first in Philadelphia and then in London (in fact he did it the other way round). But she does correct one common misconception – that Bruce Springsteen's *Born in the USA* is a work of nationalist propaganda. His is a dissenting voice in a national musical culture which, as this robotically intelligent study makes clear, is in the process of rejecting its subversive roots.

In *The Aesthetics of Rock* (first published in 1970) Richard Meltzer detours through the history of philosophy in order to shed light on the 1960s. Forcing together such unlikely bedfellows as the Byrds and the Apollonian mind, Dylan and Aristotle, Herman's Hermits and Nietzsche, Meltzer's pronouncements have none of Kaplan's authority. Though described by the author in his foreword to this new edition as the first "serious rock book", it is little more than a dictionary of rock trivia. The revelation that out of the five Beach Boys only one (Dennis Wilson) could surf is the sort of irrelevance at which Meltzer excels. But weary intellectual tropes notwithstanding, his enthusiasm for "a time when the music was more concerned with sound than image" is cheering.

Rock of Ages: The "Rolling Stone" History of Rock and Roll by Ed Ward, Geoffrey Stokes and Ken Tucker (645pp. Penguin. Paperback, £7.95, 0 14 010053 9) traces the music from its indeterminate origins (to some *undiscovered* it began in the 1920s with the first "hillbilly" and "race" records, to others it emanated from post-Second World War blues and others still aver that Elvis Presley happened on it while experimenting in a recording studio with Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup's "That's Alright (Mama)"), to the present day. Under chapter headings such as "Red Clay vs. Sequins" and "Wham! Clam. Thank You. Ma'am" the authors explore the music as well as the culture and business it has generated.

Jazz in the 1980s

Glasnost, the Soviet Press and red greens

continued from page 1440

accusations. Some material of this nature appeared in the 1960s (such as Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*), but this is the first systematic account of the prosaic side of the terror, of the everyday concerns of executioners and victims. Until now, pages like this could be found only in *samizdat* or Western publications. The autobiographical parts of the novel, which describe the experience of a man who fell into the mining-machine of the "great terror", are written with powerful simplicity and authenticity.

Rybakov's novel has become accessible to the public thanks to the politics of *glasnost*, but he started writing it in the time of the Khrushchev reforms. This is not an isolated case. The relaxation of censorship has brought about the mass publication of many works which have been banned until now. The editorial boards of literary journals are striving to outdo each other by announcing their intention to publish more and more "rehabilitated books". The battles that were waged over the publication of Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* and Akhmatova's poem *Requiem* are already well known in the West. Such a masterpiece of post-revolutionary prose as Andrei Platonov's novel *Kotlovan* (The Foundation Pit) has become accessible to Soviet readers. There are constant discussions about a Russian translation of George Orwell. A full list of "rehabilitated books" would stretch over several pages, but some concrete examples are amusing in their way. For example, it has emerged that permission was long withheld for the publication of books by the Argentinian writer Ernesto Sabato only because he had allowed himself some critical remarks about Fidel Castro.

The most important of these rehabilitations so far seems to be the decision of the journal *Oktyabr* (October) to publish Vasily Grossman's novel *Life and Fate* (TLS, November 22, 1985), during 1988. The book stands out for the extraordinary depth of its comparative psychological analysis of Stalinism and Fascism. Ironically, *Oktyabr* was the chief stronghold of diehard Stalinists during Grossman's lifetime (indeed, denunciations from these circles played an important role in the banning of the novel). But today *Oktyabr*'s new editorial board is eager to be among the leaders of *glasnost*, and as the Grossman case shows, is doing

so quite successfully.

Unexpectedly, all this growth of interest has in no way subverted the position of *samizdat*. In fact the opposite has happened: as official publications have become freer, the number and the circulation of unofficial publications have grown as well. Undoubtedly the most important of these is the Leningrad publication *Merkur* (Mercury). The city's authorities cannot afford to ignore it. The Moscow newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya* (Soviet Russia) has referred to it as a reliable source of information. The journal's editor, Yelena Zelinskaya, has great authority both in unofficial and official journalistic circles. The quarterly journal is disseminated in more than a thousand copies—a remarkable circulation for a typewritten publication.

The *samizdat* journals of the Gorbachev period can be divided into various categories. First of all, the literary journals and almanacs, many of which have existed since the Brezhnev period, continue to appear. They include *Chasy* (Hours), *Obvodyi Kunal* (The Obvodny Canal), and *Mitn zhurnal* (Mitya's journal) in Leningrad, and *Tret'ya modernizatsiya* (Third Modernization) in Riga, and so on. In most cases these publications bring together poets and prose writers from various avant-garde groups who, while not very interested in politics, have long been in conflict with the official Union of Writers. The relatively apolitical nature of such journals helped them to survive even through the period when the *samizdat* press was being most vigorously suppressed. Alongside the literary magazines, rock music journals such as *Roxy* in Leningrad and *Ukha* (The Ear) in Moscow have sprung up. In the opinion of Ilya Smirnov, who is one of the ideologists of, and a regular contributor to, these magazines, what we are seeing here is no longer just an artistic phenomenon: it has taken on a social dimension, since rock music is linked to the growing movement of the "Soviet new left".

It is this movement which is providing the basic stimulus for the development of "new *samizdat*". Its success is due above all to the close link between the journal and a Leningrad left informal group called Epicentre. The activities of Epicentre and its rival organization, The Council for the Ecology of Culture (SEK), have become widely known beyond Lening-

rad. Despite tactical differences between them, these two groups constitute a kind of bloc of ecologists and neo-Marxists which is little like the West German Green Party. They organize discussions and wage a campaign against the demolition of old buildings and against economic plans which will destroy the ecological balance. Many leftist clubs and groups are growing up not only in Leningrad but throughout the country. They either attempt to issue their own typescript bulletins, or exchange information through the most popular *samizdat* journals. The Leningrad *Perekryostok mneniy* (Crossroads of opinions), and in the same city a club of "revolutionary Marxists" with the peaceful name *Adehlida* (Adehlida) disseminates its journal *Vo ves' rost* (Standing Upright). In Moscow the *Obshchina* (Commune) socialist club is publishing an information bulletin once a fortnight called *Den' za dnyom* (Day by Day).

The most serious publications are all linked in one way or another with associations of clubs. The first meeting of unofficial leftist groups from all over the country took place in Moscow in August 1987. It decided to create a "Circle of Social Initiative" and a Federation of Socialist Social Clubs (FSOK). The "Circle", conceived by its founders as a wide association of cultural, ecological and political clubs without a single ideology or platform, has not really developed substantially, although its prospects remain good. The FSOK, on the other hand, has, in the few months since the August meeting, become a competent and united organization, in no small measure thanks to the appearance of its own *samizdat* journal, the first called by the neutral title of *Svidetel* (Witness), but in November renamed *Levy povorot* (Left Turn).

Of course this "new *samizdat*" co-exists with other publications whose stance is based on the traditions of 1970s dissidence. The magazine *Glasnost*, edited by Sergei Grigoryants, is well known in the West. In Moscow and Leningrad, however, this journal is constantly subjected to harsh criticism, and not just from the authorities. Grigoryants is accused of thinking more about reception abroad than about his readers within the country. It is also contended that the magazine's published material is often of doubtful accuracy. Greater authority is enjoyed by *Express-Chronicle*, another publication which attempts to continue the traditions of "classical *samizdat*" of the 1970s, though it too is accused of aiming at "export only".

The main problem for the *samizdat* press, whatever its political or cultural orientation, is how to forge a relationship with official publications in a period of liberalization. If traditional *samizdat* (the heirs of which are *Glasnost* and *Express-Chronicle*) tried to become an alternative to the official press, then the new *samizdat* is striving to co-exist and co-operate with it. Copies of *Mercury* and other leftist publications can be found in the editorial offices of "real" papers. And when Yelena Zelinskaya organized a meeting in Leningrad of the editors of *samizdat* magazines, it received official sanction. Representatives of

practically all the unofficial publications except *Glasnost* were invited to the meeting, and correspondents from *Literaturnaya Gazeta* and *Izvestiya*, the Novosti Press Agency and other organs of the state press were also present. Not a single one of these official organs ran a report on the meeting, but the very fact of the presence in Leningrad of representatives of the "mainstream Soviet press" is very significant.

What also became clear at the Leningrad meeting was that there are not one but three different *samizdat*s in the country. But the literary avant-garde, the traditional dissidents and the "new left" hardly argued—they could not find any common subjects for discussion. Some were discussing "freedom from the government and the nation", others were talking about "the unreformability of communism", while others were trying to work out a concept of a "social movement for structural reforms".

It seems that the change in the political situation has created no fewer (though possibly more) problems for *samizdat* than for the official press. Attempts by certain *samizdat* publications to compete with official newspapers in the area of "the criticism of individual shortcomings" will get nowhere. More and more subjects are being opened up for discussion, and it is very much easier for the correspondents of state newspapers to gather information than it is for the editors of *samizdat* bulletins.

It is clear, however, that even with liberalization the independent small-circulation publications cannot be squeezed out by the state. This is not just a question of degrees of radicalism and sharpness of criticism. The very same writers (myself included) sometimes consider the same questions in both *samizdat* and official publications.

Soviet society's real need for *samizdat* does not arise only because of the continuing "shortage of *glasnost*" in various areas. Thanks to their independence, *samizdat* journals can follow a consistent editorial line without glancing over their shoulders at the establishment's view. The movement of the Soviet new left could not have developed without the existence of its own information and discussion bulletins. In short, *samizdat* is beginning to function in the same way as small-scale radical publications in the West. In addition, for writers and poets the existence of *samizdat* (and the relatively tolerant attitude of the authorities) gives increased freedom of choice. Things which cannot get into the mainstream press can be disseminated by the independent publications.

Both the revived state press and *samizdat* are contributing to the creation of a civil society in the Soviet Union. The question is how stable and long-term these tendencies will be, and to what extent the growing social movement will be able to exert real influence on how the situation develops. This depends not only on the stance taken by the authorities, but also on the degree to which progressive elements—in journals and in the clubs—take advantage of the opportunities which *glasnost* has opened up to them.

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS ON

"Balkan War Incident", the TLS of December 26, 1912, carried a review of Adventures of War with Cross and Crescent, by Philip Gibbs and Bernard Grant, from which these extracts are taken:

... That the newspaper correspondents in these days of journalistic enterprise may well be an unmitigated nuisance to a general commanding an army in the field, as well as a serious annoyance to the Government which is conducting a war, can readily be understood. Mr Gibbs acknowledges as much. And if the Bulgarian authorities had frankly taken the ground at the first that they would not permit correspondents to accompany their armies to the front, there would, doubtless, have been an outburst of indignant protest; but military exigencies are, after all, a matter for the combatants themselves to decide and it is by no means improbable that this is what will happen in the next great war. What the Bulgarians chose to do, however, was to be as conciliatory as possible to the correspondents at the first, assuring them that every facility would be put at their disposal, only when the

war began, to fail to make good their promises and to subject the correspondents to what Mr Gibbs calls a "campaign of oppression." Mr Gibbs has woven of his experiences a readable story, if not of war, at least of the condition of a region when war has swept over it, and of the hardships and difficulties of a war correspondent when trying to do his duty under circumstances of immense discouragement.

If from the Turkish side Mr Grant was not privileged to see much more of the active hostilities, it was less the fault of the Turkish authorities than of their enemies. Had fortune favoured the Turkish arms it is probable that the correspondents would in time have been permitted to get up to the fighting line; but before they could reach the front that front was already shattered, and Mr Grant, with the other representatives of the Press, was met, engulfed, and swept backwards by the wave of fugitives from Kirk Kilisse and Lule Burgas. It is a terrible picture which we get of the beaten soldiery, starving and broken in spirit, and many of Mr Grant's photographs are of extraordinary interest.

TLS LISTINGS

A comprehensive weekly selection of new and forthcoming books received by the TLS

INDEX OF BOOKS REVIEWED

Anthropology

Des, Vessia Structure and Cognition: Aspects of Hindu caste and ritual, 2nd edition
Oxford UP, 171pp. £4.50 (paperback). 0 19 561799 X. 22/10/87.

Archaeology

Shanks, Michael, and Christopher Tilley Social Theory and Archaeology
Oxford UP, 243pp. £25 (hardcover), £8.95 (paperback). 0 7456 0183 9 (hc), 0 7456 0184 7 (pb). 10/12/87.

Architecture

Becher, Margaret A. W. N. Pugin: An annotated critical bibliography
Mansell, 496pp. £65. 0 7201 1774 7. 24/11/87.
Crossman, Kelly Architecture in Transition: From art to practice, 1885-1906
Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 193pp. illus. Can\$35. 0 7735 0604 7. 29/10/87.
Toglia, Ian The Foreign Office: An architectural history
Mansell, 278pp. illus. £42.50. 0 7201 1884 0. 13/12/87.

Art

Alan, James, and Caroline Roberts, editors Syria and Iran: Three studies in medieval ceramics
Oxford UP, 222pp. plates. £37.50 (hardcover), £25 (paperback). 0 19 728007 2 (hc), 0 19 728008 0 (pb). 12/12/87.
Braschi, Introduction by Paul Morand Paris After Dark (1st pub 1933)
Thomas and Hudson, 62 plates. £35. 0 500 54131 0.

Byron, John Portrait of a Chinese Paradise: Erotica and sexual customs of the late Qing period
Quartet, 323pp. plates. £25. 0 7043 2621 3. 21/11/88.
Lelli, James A., editor Symbols in Life and Art: The Royal Society symposium in memory of George Whalley
Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 151pp. illus. Can\$35. 0 7735 0616 0. 23/10/87.

MacKenzie, Ian British Prints: Dictionary and price guide
Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 359pp. illus. £35. 0 902028 96 0. 30/11/87.

Black, Douglas Recollections and Reflections (Memoir Club)
British Medical Association, 132pp. £14.95. 0 7279 0209 1. 31/1/87.

Buchan, John Introduction by Peter Vansittart These are Remembrances: MEMOIRS OF PETER BUCHAN IN THE Great War (Privately printed 1919)
Buchan and Squire, 82pp. illus. £9.95. 0 907675 80 8. 20/11/88.

Sands, William Franklin Introduction by Christopher Blighs At the Court of Korea (Century Lives and Letters)
Century Hutchinson, 217pp. £4.95 (paperback). 0 7126 1765 5. 17/12/87.

Business

Gerratt, Bob The Learning Organization and the Need for Directors Who Think
Aldershot: Gower, 141pp. £17.50. 0 566 02743 7. 17/12/87.

Turner, Terry Seasonal Patterns in Business and Everyday Life
Aldershot: Gower, 243pp. £35. 0 566 02699 6. 17/12/87.

Classics

Fraser, F. M., and E. Matthews, editors A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, vol 1: The Aegean Islands, Cyprus and Crete
Oxford: Clarendon, 480pp. £60. 0 19 864222 9. 17/12/87.

Ordi, edited by J. C. McKeown Ovid: "Amores", vol 1: Text and prolegomena
Liverpool University Press, 220pp. £25. 0 905205 69 3. 14/12/87.

Economics

Buckley, Peter J., and Patrick Artisen North-South Direct Investment in the European Communities
Macmillan, 194pp. £35. 0 333 45642 4. 17/12/87.

King, Frank H. H. The History of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, vol 1: The Hongkong Bank in Late Imperial China 1854-1902
Cambridge UP, 701pp. £69.00. 0 521 32706 7. 7/1/88.

Palgrave, R. H. English, edited by John Eatwell, Murray Milgate and Peter Newman The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics, 4 vols (1st pub 1894-1899)
Macmillan, £95. 0 935859 10 1. 11/87.

Ridd, Carl China's Political Economy: The quest for development since 1949 (Economics of the World series)
Oxford UP, 418pp. £12.50 (paperback). 0 19 877089 8 (hc), 0 19 877090 1 (pb).

Singer, Max Passage to a Human World: The dynamics of creating global wealth
Indianapolis, IN: Hudson Institute, 390pp. £21.95. 1 53813 000 4. 9/12/87.

Yagci, Ghani The Economics of François Quesnay (Studies in Political Economy)
Macmillan, 247pp. £29.50. 0 333 42816 1. 8/12/87.

Fiction

Blyden, T. J. Greek Gifts
Harcourt-Hamilton, 200pp. £10.95. 0 241 12356 6. 14/1/88.
Grafton, Sue "It's for Deadbeat"
Macmillan, 259pp. £8.95. 0 333 44839 2. 5/12/87.

Holtby, Winifred Introduction by Letitia Cooper South Riding (Virago Modern Classics, 273; 1st pub 1936)
Virago, 492pp. £3.95 (paperback). 0 86068 969 7. 7/1/88.
Keller, Garrison Leaving Home: A collection of Lake Wobegon stories
Faber, 244pp. £9.95. 0 571 15155 8. 11/1/88.

Kenally, Thomas Victim of the Aurora (1st pub 1977)
Hodder and Stoughton, 203pp. £3.50 (paperback). 0 340 47886 7. 7/1/88.

McCutcheon, Philip Overnight Express: A Simon Shard novel
Hodder and Stoughton, 190pp. £10.95. 0 340 40194 X. 7/1/88.

Pearce, Michael The Mamur Zap and the Return of the Carpet (Crime Club)
Collins, 214pp. £10.95. 0 00 232167 X. 5/1/88.

Royce, Ken The President Is Dead
Hodder and Stoughton, 268pp. £10.95. 0 340 41278 X. 21/1/88.

Seaman, Donald Rogue Bear
Harcourt-Hamilton, 354pp. £11.95. 0 241 12363 1. 7/1/88.

Tapley, William G. Dead Meat: Attorney Brady Coyne's fifth case (Crime Club)
Collins, 221pp. £9.95. 0 00 232161 0. 5/1/88.

Waugh, Teresa An Intolerable Burden
Harcourt-Hamilton, 195pp. £10.95. 0 241 12352 6. 14/1/88.

White, Edmund The Beautiful Room Is Empty
Pan, 184pp. £9.95. 0 330 30394 X. 22/1/88.

Wilson, Chris Bas: A novel
Brighton: Harvester, 150pp. £10.95. 0 7108 1230 2. 7/1/88.

Wolfe, Tom The Bonfire of the Vanities
Capra, 659pp. £12.95. 0 224 02439 6. 8/2/88.

Fiction in English translation

Fabre, Ferdinand translated by Robert Liddell The Abbe Tigiane
Owen, 182pp. £10.95. 0 7086 0693. 21/11/88.

Hannu, Knut translated by Garry Bolmer Mysteries (Picador Classics; 1st pub in UK 1973)
Pan, 254pp. £3.95 (paperback). 0 330 24638 3. 8/1/88.

Hussein, Abdullah translated by Muhammad Umar Memon Downfall by Degrees and other stories
TSAR, Suite 4, 2270 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4P 2C7, 197pp. £5.95/Can\$11.95 (paperback). 0 920661 02 5. 30/11/87.

Muili, Robert; translated by Elzine Wilkins and Ernst Kaler Tonka and other stories (Picador Classics; 1st pub 1965)
Pan, 222pp. £3.50 (paperback). 0 330 30190 X. 8/1/88.

Pasternak, Boris translated by Max Hayward and Marina Harari Doctor Zhivago (1st pub 1958)
Collins Harvill, 540pp. £15.95 (paperback). 0 00 371466 7. 5/1/88.

Quirago, Horacio translated and edited by J. David Danielson The Exiles and other stories
Austin: Texas UP, 150pp. £17.95 (hardcover), £8.95 (paperback). 0 292 72030 5 (hc), 0 292 72031 3 (pb). 20/10/87.

Remarque, Erich Maria translated by Walter Sorell and Deaver Lindley Arch of Triumph (1st pub in UK 1946)
Pan, 446pp. £4.50 (paperback). 0 330 30081 4. 8/1/88.

Skvorecky, Josef translated by Rosemary Kavan et al The Mountain Demons of Lieutenant Boruvka (1st pub in UK 1973)
Faber, 288pp. £3.95 (paperback). 0 571 14972 3. 11/1/88.

Ungut, Sigrid translated by Charles Archer and J. S. Scott Kristin Lavransdatter (Picador Classics; 1st pub in UK 1930)
Pan, 944pp. £6.95 (paperback). 0 330 25202 X. 8/1/88.

Keetman, Peter; edited by Rolf Sachse A Week at the Volkswagen Factory: Photographs from April 1953 (Photo Pocket Book 2)
Nisben, 19 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2PT, 94pp. illus. £5.95 (paperback). 1 83378 402 8.

Koelleck, Reinhart Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the pathogenesis of modern society (1st pub in Germany 1959)
Leamington Spa: Berg, 220pp. £25. 0 85496 535 1. 6/1/88.

MacPherson, Kerle L. A Wilderness of Marshes: The origins of public health in Shanghai, 1843-1893 (East Asian Historical Monographs)
Oxford UP, 346pp. £20. 0 19 584019 4. 13/10/87.

Marshall, Robert All the King's Men: The truth behind SOE's great wartime disaster
Collins, 314pp. illus. £12.95. 0 00 217786 2. 5/1/88.

Morgan, Jane Conflict and Order: The police and labour disputes in England and Wales 1900-1939
Oxford: Clarendon, 305pp. illus. £10. 0 198201 28 1. 31/1/87.

Peckles, Hugh H. Warshipbuilding on the Clyde: Naval orders and the prosperity of the Clyde shipbuilding industry, 1869-1939
Edinburgh: Donald, 205pp. £20. 0 85976 193 2. 27/11/87.

Phillips, Mark The Memoir of Marco Parenti: A life in Medicine
Oxford UP, Princeton UP, 283pp. £25.10. 0 091 05302 5. 11/1/88.

Fitchard, James Louis XV's Navy, 1748-1762: A study of organization and administration
Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 285pp. Can\$32.50. 0 7735 0570 9. 9/87.

Richardson, Ruth Death, Dissection and the Destructive
Routledge and Kegan Paul, 246pp. illus. £19.95. 0 7102 0919 1. 14/1/88.

Stacey, C. P., and Barbara M. Wilson The Half-Million: The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1946
Toronto UP, 198pp. illus. £17.50/£27.50. 0 8020 5757 8. 17/11/88.

History, contemporary

Cante, David Sixty-Eight: The year of the barricades
Harcourt-Hamilton, 404pp. £14.95. 0 241 12174 4. 11/1/88.

Gardhof, Raymond L. Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis
Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 159pp. \$18.95 (hardcover), \$8.95 (paperback). 0 8157 3052 7 (hc), 0 8157 3051 0 (pb). 17/12/87.

Granville, J. A. S., and Bernard Wasserstein The Major International Treaties Since 1945: A history and guide with texts
Netham, 328pp. £30. 0 416 38080 8. 3/12/87.

History of science

Dagré, John, editor The Latest on the Best: Essays on evolution and optimality
MIT, 359pp. £24.75. 0 262 04090 5.

Robson, John M. Origin and Evolution of the Universe: Evidence for design?
Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 297pp. illus. Can\$35 (hardcover), Can\$15.95 (paperback). 0 7735 0617 9 (hc), 0 7735 0618 7 (pb). 24/11/87.

Language

Chomsky, Noam Language and the Problems of Knowledge (The Managua Lectures)
MIT, 205pp. £17.95 (hardcover), £7.95 (paperback). 0 262 03137 7 (hc), 0 262 03070 8 (pb).

Frauenfelder, Uli H., and Lorraine Komisarjevsky Tyler, editors Spoken Word Recognition ("Cognition" Special Issue)
MIT, 242pp. £15.75 (paperback). 0 262 56039 9.

Law

Brownlie, Ian, and D. W. Brownlie, editors The British Year Book of International Law 1986
Oxford: Clarendon, 671pp. £50. 0 19 825604 3. 3/12/87.

Literature and criticism

Anderson, Sherwood Winesburg, Ohio (Picador Classics; 1st pub in US 1919)
Pan, 247pp. £3.50 (paperback). 0 330 30287 6. 8/1/88.

Albrecht, Donald. Designing Dreams 1425
Ambrise, Stephen E. Nixon 1424
Antonius, Saraya. Where the Jim Consult 1428
Arnold, Catharine. Changeling 1428
Brown, William Edward. A History of Russian Literature of the Romantic Period 1442
Burkhardt, Charles. The Pleasure of Miss Pym 1420
Calvoressi, Peter. Who's Who in the Bible 1437
Cameron, Deborah, and Elizabeth Frazer. The Last to Kill 1427
Carr, Ian, Digby Fairweather and Brian Priestley. Jazz: The essential companion 1441
Chesterion, G. K. As I Was Saying... Daylight and Nightmare. Thirteen Detectives. The Annotated Innocence of Father Brown. Collected Nonsense and Light Verse. The Essential G. K. Chesterion 1419
Chulleanán, Eileán Ní. The Second Voyage 1435
Cohen, Hennie, and Tristram Potter Coffin (Editors). The Folklore of American Holidays 1424
Cohn, D. J. (Editor). G. K. Chesterion 1419
Dahlhaus, Carl. Schoenberg and the New Music 1440
Dowty, Alan. Closed Borders 1422
Ellner, Lorenz. An Outline of Nineteenth-Century European Painting 1426
Fallon, Ivan, and James Strides. Takeovers 1421
Fido, Martin. The Crimes, Detection and Death of Jack the Ripper 1427
Fleischer, Cornell H. Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire 1439
Foreville, Raymond, and Gillian Keir (Editors). The Book of St Gilbert 1439
Frantz, Douglas. Mr Diamond 1421
Genette, Gérard. Seuil 1436
GIVEN-WILSON, Chris. The English Nobility in the Middle Ages 1439
Greenland, Colin. The Hour of the Thin Ox 1428
Hall, Richard. My Life With Tiny 1421
Harris, Melvin. Jack the Ripper 1427
Henry, Avril. The Mirror of Mans Salvation 1439
Hewitt, Nicholas. The Golden Age of Louis-Ferdinand Céline 1436
Hinchliff, Peter. Benjamin Jowett and the Christian Religion 1437
Howells, Martin, and Keith Skinner. The Ripper Legacy: The life and death of Jack the Ripper 1427
Jaccottet, Philippe. Une Transcription secrète 1436
Kaplan, E. Ann Rocking Around the Clock 1441
Loescher, Gilbert, and John A. Scanlan. Calculated Kindness 1422
McLellan, David. Marxism and Religion 1438
Madrack, Jeff. Marrying for Money 1421
Meltzer, Richard. The Aesthetics of Rock 1441
Ailler, Arthur. Timebends: A Life 1425
Nobel, Ian. Language and Narration in Céline's Writing: The challenge of disorder 1436
Pocock, Tom. Horatio Nelson 1427
Pym, Barbara. Civil to Strangers and other writings 1420
Ramsey, Douglas K. The Corporate Warriors 1421
Reed, Jeremy. Selected Poems 1438
Rendell, Ruth. Collected Short Stories. (Editor) A Warning to the Curious: The Ghost Stories of M. R. James 1428
Roberts, Jane. Royal Artists 1426
Rosen, Janice. The World of Barbara Pym 1420
Sali, Lawrence. Devotions 1435
Salwak, Dale (Editor). The Life and Work of Barbara Pym 1420
Vell, Zahra (Editor and translator). Artists' Techniques in Golden Age Spain 1426
Vogt, Howard. Flagstad: Singer of the century 1441
Wansell, Geoff. Tycoon 1421
Wilson, Colin,

